Iconography, Identity and Inclusion: the Winged Disk and Royal Power During the Reign

of Darius the Great

by

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Abstract

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As a symbol of Ahuramazda the winged disk represents a powerful marker of Achaemenid Persian identity from c. 520 BCE onwards, i.e., from almost the very beginning of Darius' reign down to at least 330 BCE. At the same time we have observed that many more examples of this imagery are to be found in the homeland than in the more distant reaches of the empire. And although there could be other contributing reasons for this, I have concluded that the visual tie between the Achaemenid monarch and his chosen god was more meaningful in the Persian homeland than anywhere else.

I propose that a need to "bring order to the land" is the most plausible explanation for Darius' promotion of Ahuramazda and the Achaemenid visual program. Those already established in power in the homeland no doubt identified themselves as Mazda worshippers, and Darius' full-blown promotion of Ahuramazda along with his proudly proclaimed Persian identity no doubt resonated with this significant power base. Accordingly, even if Darius usurped power that was not rightfully his, he was able to

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emerge as the accepted heir to the throne of Persia. He was able to replace the Teispid dynasty with his own, while keeping the essence of the empire's power intact. The symbol of the winged disk represented validation and inclusion into an elite group of autocrats and ruling figures: it became, in short, the most potent emblem of the durable Achaemenid rule.

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For David,

Mon Cher Professeur

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Chapter One. Introduction

1.1. Overview

When speaking of the Achaemenid Persian Empire (Fig. 1.1), we must begin our discussion not with the concept of a powerful Western Asiatic empire of this name created circa 550 BCE[1] by Cyrus the Great (r. 559-530), but rather with an alternate paradigm—namely, that the inception of the realm which was to become known as "Achaemenid" occurred, in fact, only shortly after 522 BCE, when Darius took the throne of a kingdom that scholars have variously assumed to have been Persian (Kuhrt, 1995:647; Wiesehofer, 1996: 2; Briant, 1996: 27), Elamite[2] (Andreas 1904, Henkelman, 2003:181) or now, Anshanite (Stronach, 2003: 235; Potts, 2005: 22-23). If this particular vision of the beginnings of the Achaemenid Empire goes against the traditional trend of historical interpretation, it must, nevertheless, be thoroughly considered for its obvious value in the context of explaining how rulership and political identity were shaped during the period in question. Such a model does much to explain the impetus behind the very sudden change in the expression of rulership at the time. Darius' newly created royal identity—as an Ahuramazda-worshipping Achaemenid[3]—can be said to offer a notable contrast to the rather ambiguous nature of royal self-representation during the reigns of

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[1] All dates in this and the following chapters, unless specified otherwise, are BCE.

[2] Andreas based his thesis on the argument that onomastically Cyrus and Darius were not related. He suggested that the Teispids were not Iranian, and they and the Achaemenids were not of the same ethnicity. See also Wiesehofer (1978: 201-202); and Kellens (2002: 422), who posits that, while the names of Darius' ancestors are Iranian, those of Cyrus' are mostly of unknown origin. This suggests to Kellens that the Teispids were non-Iranian.

[3] A name derived from that of the eponymous founder of Darius' royal line, Achaemenes (OP *Haxamanishiya*. Kent, 1953: 212).

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the last two Teispid[4] monarchs: Cyrus II and his son, Cambyses II (r. 530-522). This change in ethnic or clan identity was integral to the foundation, legitimacy and cohesion of the new empire of the Persians and for the ensuing formation of a characteristic Persian identity. This dissertation explores how Darius created such an identity, not least through religious iconography including specific uses of the winged disk.

1.2. Historical Background

From the moment Cyrus II conquered Babylon in 539, he became the most powerful ruler the ancient Near East had ever known. This great monarch was unusual for his time in that he honored the beliefs and customs of those whom he conquered; he allowed the exiled Jews of Babylon to return home; and he is thought to have given orders for the Temple in Jerusalem to be rebuilt (although this is debated—c.f. Briant, 1996: 58-59; Wiesehofer, 2001: 49). He also consolidated under his rule a great swathe of land from western Anatolia to the steppes of Central Asia, and introduced, at his capital Pasargadae, architecturally innovative stone architecture (Stronach, 2003: 134). In a matter of two decades, this ruler who called himself a descendent of Teispes and a "king of Anshan" succeeded in gaining control of a very considerable part of the known world.[5]

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[4] The use of the term "Teispid" was first suggested by Kellens, 2002: 422. Cf. also Stronach, 2003: 138; and now Potts, 2005: 22.

[5] For Cyrus' ancestry as listed on the so-called Cyrus Cylinder, see Pritchard, 1955: 315. For the Nabonidis chronicle, Grayson, 1975: 106; also, 2000: 21-111; and the Ur text Gadd, Legrain and Smith, 1928 (cf. Potts, 2005: 13). Both refer to him as "king of Anshan."

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When Cyrus' son and heir Cambyses II succeeded to the throne, he claimed control over lands reaching north to the Jaxartes, east towards the Indus, south to the Gulf and westwards to the shores of Lydia (Wiesehofer, 1996:1-4). Not to be overshadowed by the great deeds of his father, in 525 Cambyses invaded and conquered Egypt. In doing so, after no more than 5 years on the throne, he had accomplished a feat that can only otherwise be credited to two of the more redoubtable monarchs of 7th century Assyria (Essarhadon, 680-669; and Ashurbanipal, 668-c.627).[6] Following the conquest of Egypt, Cambyses appears to have made a strategically flawed calculation: he elected to stay in Egypt and to rule his empire from afar, essentially leaving control of his homeland to his administrators, and a younger brother, Bardiya (Dandamaev, 1976; Kuhrt, 1995: 665). This proved to be a disastrous decision; only eight brief years into his reign, in 522 BCE, the throne of Persia was usurped by Bardiya, and Cambyses was dead. Herodotus (3. 61-66) claims he died of an accidental, self-inflicted wound; but, not inconceivably, he was the target of a murder plot (Kellens, 2002: 453), perhaps even instigated by his brother, who had seized the throne in his absence.[7]

After Bardiya[8] came to power, the empire of the   Teispids was thrown into a state of confusion and violence (Briant, 1996: 127-133). It was at this moment that Darius, whether as the main instigator or as a party to a second coup, committed regicide (Kuhrt,

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[6] Cf. Kuhrt, 1995: 499-500.
[7] Fratricide is all too well attested in the history of Persia. See Kuhrt, 2007: 165.
[8] Bardiya is also referred to in various instances as Gaumata, or Smerdis (Herodotus, 3.61-66; also H.S. Nyberg, 1954; Dandamaev, 1963).

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1995: 665), and Bardiya's reign ended after a mere two months.[9] At this point, the empire was apparently utterly uncohesive,[10] with numerous contestants all vying for power. [11] Furthermore, the situation was far from normalized by Darius' reach for power; within his first two years as king he had to quell nine revolts (Kuhrt, 1995: 665; Briant, 1996: 127-133).

In 522, in other words, the empire was in danger of fragmenting into a number of rival states. As part of the process of restoring order, Darius embarked on the colossal task of consolidating his rule. During this initial and fragile period it was essential for him to both underscore the legitimacy of his claim to the throne, and, in a sense, "reinvent" the empire. Through the combined creation of a new administrative structure, an original form of imperial art, the invention of a written form of the Old Persian language, and, above all, through what would seem to have been a distinctive and newly espoused official religion,[12] Darius sought to redefine the attributes of Persian rulership. What Darius proffered was a strong, readily identifiable identity with which his family, tribe, clan or courtly entourage (both within and outside Persia proper) could identify as a cohesive ruling group—either as elites, or a culturally united, ethnic community. This

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[9] Briant, 1996: 114. Kellens (2002:453) remarks that the murder of Bardiya—seemingly identified as "Gaumata the Magian" in Darius' Bisotun inscription (DBI.57. Cf. Kent, 1953: 118)—was a "strangely Romanesque and cryptic event". Many questions are left unanswered.

[10] As per Kuhrt (1995: 665)—it took Darius just over a year to cope with the massive uprisings against him.

[11] Kuhrt, 1995: 666. Bardiya's rule had been called into question; and now Darius—a usurper—was laying claim to the already contested throne.

[12] Newly espoused publicly in monuments and inscriptions. It is unknown if the actual religion itself was a novelty in Fars, or if it continued a tradition introduced by the previous Teispid rulers.

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close-knit, royally connected community identified its members as "Achaemenid." Above all, his novel image of an "Achaemenid" stemmed from his claim to be descended from an already long lineage of eight kings, beginning with his eponymous ancestor Achaemenes (Bisotun, DBI.3; DBI.8-11 cf. Kent, 1953:116-117). His actions appear to illustrate a significant break with what is known of "royal definition" under Cyrus II and Cambyses.

While there are clear examples of continuity between the tastes and priorities of the Teispid monarchs and the Achaemenids, there are also distinctive differences. For example, it is true that Darius continued Cyrus' example of Apadana style architecture with only minor changes at both Susa and Persepolis.[13] Both rulers invoked foreign deities when outside of their homeland of Persia.[14] However, while Cyrus included Assyrian-inspired apotropaic imagery in the stone doorjambs of his completed palatial structures at Pasargadae (Stronach, 2001: 99; Kawami, 1972: 147), Darius synthesized Mesopotamian iconography to a still greater extent with the art of Persian, Elamite, Egyptian and other contemporaneous cultures. During his reign, it can be said that a new artistic language was developed and used in both monumental and portable art. And perhaps less obviously but as significantly, Darius played up his association with an Indo-Iranian deity that was never mentioned in the inscriptions of his predecessors.

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[13] Darius changed the Apadana shape from rectangular to square at Susa, among other alterations. See Stronach, 2001 for an elegant discussion of the differences in architectural styles between the reigns of Cyrus and Darius.
[14] Cyrus invoked Marduk at Babylon; Darius Re or Atum in Egypt.

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1.3. Achaemenid Religion and Identity in Previous scholarship: an Overview

The significant role that Darius gave to a newly espoused religion in the creation of his novel concept of an "Achaemenid Persian Identity" has, to a great degree, been downplayed. Scholars have preferred to focus on a presumed continuity in administration, royal identity, and religion from the time of the foundation of the empire under Cyrus the Great down to the time of the overthrow of the empire by Alexander in 330 BCE (Nylander 1970: 18). In order to understand something of the nature of the relationship between the line of Cyrus—a line that is associated in Cyrus' Cylinder with "Anshan" not Parsa—and the Achaemenid line of Darius associated with "Parsa" (Stronach, 2003: 142; Waters, 2005: 98), it is essential to understand both something of the religion of the rulers of southwestern Iran as it is reflected in the archaeological record, and its place in royal ideology.

Defining the nature of religion in the 6th century BC in southwestern Iran, however, has long been problematic. Too often, there is a desire to pigeonhole religious practices within currently known doctrines in order to accommodate modern perceptions. Just as various prior studies of Achaemenid religion have sought to define the religious practices of Cyrus, Darius and his successors (Gershevitz, 1965; Boyce, 1984; Schwartz, 1985), some have attempted to prove or disprove the Zoroastrian condition of that same faith (Boyce, 1984; Gnoli, 1974), or to downplay the importance of religion and religious practice in Achaemenid Persia, and hence define it as a tool of propaganda.[15] While each

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[15] Lecoq (1984: 16) calls it a state religion; Cameron (1948: 9), a political religion; Briant (1991: 8) describes a politico-religious ceremony that gave the king his divine legitimacy.

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of these interpretations has contributed to the debate over the nature of the belief systems of the "Persian" kings, a subtext of meaning has been overlooked: namely, that religion was an important, omnipresent element in royal Persian thought and self-identification—one could almost say the foundation of royal self-expression—throughout the period under review. Even so, with the spotty and rather vague material reference to royally practiced religion during Cyrus' reign it is nearly impossible to come to any solid conclusion regarding the actual royally practiced religion of the Teispid dynasty. The few Greek sources, and the extant structures and inscriptions shed little light on the issue.

1.4. Textual Sources—Greek

Greek sources[16] have traditionally portrayed the religion of the court of Cyrus II to Darius III in a manner which, on one hand, corresponds with the material record (such as Herodotus' statement that the Persians used no temples for worship[17]); but on the other, would appear to be of questionable reliability (Schwartz, 1985:666). Too often, historians have cited Greek sources as accurate contemporary accounts, forgetting that most are already somewhat anachronistic with reference to the reigns of Cyrus II, Cambyses II or even Darius I. Moreover, as Kuhrt has stressed, these same sources could be hostile or misinformed and could often portray a somewhat skewed picture of Persia (1995:652). These sources have even been described as "myopic" (Briant, 1997:31), for there are surprising omissions—for example, Herodotus, while describing the cities of Susa and Sardis, never mentions the site of Persepolis in his History (*ibid*).

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[16] E.g. Herodotus, Ctesias, Xenophon, Dinon, Diodorus, Strabo, Justin, Nicholas of Damascus (Dandamaev, 1993b: 52).
[17] Herodotus, I.130-33.

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Xenophon's musings on Persian religion proffer no better. Putting aside what Kuhrt has described as his "moralizing and novelistic style" (1995:648), which may betray motivations that transcended the proper bounds of history, he mentions in his *Cyropaedia* (I.6.I; III.3.22; VII.3.57; VIII.I.23; 3,II seq. 3.24; c.f. Schwartz, 1985: 684) that Cyrus sacrificed to various divinities (Zeus, the Sun, Hestia and "the other gods"). There is no other evidence to support this claim. Schwartz posits that Xenophon may have simply been attributing practices to Cyrus II that he had personally observed a century and a half later when he was in the company of Cyrus the Younger and his followers (1985: 684). In essence, there appear to be no contemporaneous accounts that accord with the archaeological record.

With these few examples in mind, it becomes apparent that it is misleading to take the Greek historians at face value without supporting material evidence. The Greek texts must be seen to be in accord with the archaeological record in order to paint an accurate picture of Cyrus's or Darius's religious practices. It is clear that more useful textual sources to refer to are those dating to the actual period in question from within the empire itself—such as royal inscriptions or foundation texts from the various capital cities, not to mention administrative texts from Persepolis. These texts—especially the royal inscriptions of Darius—present a very different picture of the royally practiced religion of the Teispid and Achaemenid monarchs from that which is found in later Greek sources.

1.5. Textual Sources—Babylonian and Persian

While there is little evidence for Cyrus' religious predilections, one document, which may at least suggest something to the effect, is the Cyrus foundation cylinder from Babylon. This document, composed by the priests or scribes of Babylon,[18] follows a traditional Mesopotamian formula for royal texts.[19] Most significantly, Cyrus' genealogy descending from Teispis (Eilers, 1974: 29; Stronach, 2003: 134) is noted. In the text of the cylinder, he is also described as taking the hand of Marduk[20]—a pious act traditionally acted out by Babylonian rulers (c.f. Eilers, 1974: 28). There is no mention of Ahuramazda, or of any other Indo-Iranian deity. But this may not reflect any personal conviction on Cyrus' part—simply a willingness to follow local tradition to ensure the following of the people of Babylon (Cambyses II and Darius were also willing to enter into similar expressions of local devotion in Egypt).

As for the evidence from the homeland, the Persepolis Fortification (or PF) texts and Persepolis Treasury (or PT) texts make no mention of Cyrus' religious inclinations. Granted, the PF texts date to the reigns of Darius and Xerxes, and the Treasury Texts even descend, in part, to the reign of Artaxerxes I—circumstances that render them, in this instance, anachronistic (these are reviewed in chapter 4). Therefore one would not expect a mention of the religious mores of the royal predecessors. Architecturally, at Pasargadae there is evidence of two plinths, and it has been proposed that they may have

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[18] Priests of Marduk, Esagila (Eilers, 1974: 27).
[19] C.f. Eiler's (1974: 25-27) comparison with traditional Babylonian royal inscriptions.
[20] Cyrus is noted as calling Marduk his "lord", and asks the deities Bel and Nebo for a long life (Pritchard, 1955: 316).

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been used for ritual purposes (cf. Stronach, 1978:141), but this still does not necessarily indicate which deity or deities were the focus of this use. The material for the reign of Cambyses II fares no better than his father's—his few inscriptions in Egypt exclusively invoke Egyptian deities; as of yet there is no known textual evidence in Persia proper dating to this monarch. As it stands, there is much speculation regarding Cyrus and Cambyses' own religious practices. For the time being, the sparse sources are insufficient to make any solid claims regarding this matter. In the case of Darius, at least there exists more substantial evidence, both archaeological and textual, to determine his religious leanings. And while it is impossible to read into the minds of these long-deceased rulers, the material evidence remaining from their days of glory provides a glimpse into the importance of the place of religion within their own personal identity. Even so, we cannot pretend to be able to label their faiths in terms of world-religion, even if their practices appear to have at least superficial links with the practice of Zoroastrianism. This particular problem will be reviewed below.

1.6. The Association of Achaemenid Persia with the Zoroastrian Faith

A number of scholars (Boyce, 1982; Shahbazi, 2002; Herrenschmidt, 2003) have attempted to link the practice of Zoroastrianism with Achaemenid Iran under Darius and the Persian empire in general, beginning with Cyrus and ending with Darius III, while others discount this idea (Benveniste, 1929, 1967; Nyberg, 1938). It is understandable that there are such opposing views on the matter. Some of the material evidence and certain expressions in the texts appear on cursory inspection to be Zoroastrian in nature. The use of fire in worship, and the focus on Ahuramazda are both integral to Zoroastrian

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practice; but there is controversy surrounding the closeness of the link between Achaemenid practice and the tenets of Zoroastrian belief. As noted by Schwartz (1985) the use of fire in ritual is attested in early Indo-Iranian religions through the Avesta, and need not be exclusively the domain of Zoroaster and his followers. The deity Ahuramazda is the focus of Zoroaster's teachings,[21] but nowhere in the Achaemenid written record, which relies heavily on rhetoric surrounding Ahuramazda, is Zoroaster mentioned. While this does not disprove a link to Zoroastrianism, Schwartz (1985) and Kellens (2002) have posited that this is due to the nature of the Achaemenid inscriptions themselves—they are political in nature and have little reason to mention a prophet such as Zoroaster. However, the extent of the association remains debatable.

Another argument for an Achaemenid link to Zoroastrianism has been the "traditional" dating of Zoroaster to the 6th century BCE (Herzfeld, 1933; Henning, 1951; Gnoli, 1997). This could conceivably identify Zoroaster's benefactor, Kavi Vistaspa, as Vistaspa (Hystaspes) the father of Darius.[22] But even this argument has been convincingly disputed (Shahbazi, 2002: 8-10). While it is true that Darius mentions his father, Vistaspa, by name in his inscriptions, the name may have been not uncommon. One must also consider that there are arguments for dating Zoroaster to earlier centuries (c.f. Skjaervo, 2005: 52-84). For example, the earlier Platonic school gives Zoroaster a date of "5,000

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[21] Zoroaster can be described as the founder of the "Mazda-worshipping Zoroastrian anti-daevic Ahura-teaching religion"(Schwartz, 1985: 665).
[22] Shahbazi (2002: 8) notes that Agathias (of Myrina, in Asia Minor) used Sasanian records for his information when he wrote in his <u>History II.24.6.</u> that "the Persians say he lived in the reign of Hystaspes without making clear if they mean the father of Darius or some other monarch of the same name".

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years before the Trojan war", or circa 6,200 BCE (Jaeger, 1948: 132-6; c.f. Boyce, 1984: 15). Boyce (1984: 12) dates Zoroaster to between c. 1400 to 1000, and others opt for a date near 1000 BC (cf. Boyce, 1992: 27-51; 2005: 1). All told, we cannot advance a connection between Darius' father Hystaspes and Zoroaster if we cannot agree on precise dates for Zoroaster's own lifetime.

Achaemenid religion has been compared to "a magico-religious system based on the fear of evil spirits and other incalculable elements in the social environment"(Schwartz, 1985:680, adapting Hooke's 1962 definition of Babylonian religion). This particular interpretation was taken from a reading of the Yashts, part of the hymns comprising the younger Avesta which demonstrate pre-Zarathustrian concepts. Due to what has been termed "possible echoes of Gathic [Zoroastrian] theology in Darius' inscriptions" (Schwartz, 1985: 685), parts of the Avesta have been taken as representative of possible beliefs in the Achaemenid concept of religion.[23] Therefore, if there is a link between younger Avestan belief and Achaemenid religious concepts, there may indeed be elements of what can be described as "magic" or shamanism, but these only comprise one facet of the belief system.

These comparisons, however, do not clarify the supposed association with Zoroastrian practice, yet do express a link to proto-Zoroastrian or ancient Indo-Iranian traditions, which were probably prevalent in Iran between 550-486 BCE, and may have simply been absorbed into Zoroastrian practice at some point. Cameron has noted the discrepancy

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[23] See also Skjaervo in V. S. Curtis *et al*, 2005: 52-81.

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between the use of haoma[24] in cult worship—evidenced by material remains at Persepolis—and the prohibition placed on this practice in Zoroaster's teachings (c.f. Cameron, 1948: 5-9). As Cameron posits (1948: 9), "Thus the court religion of the Achaemenid kings would seem to have been a fourth Iranian religion existing at the side of magism, Mithraism, and Zoroastrianism, independent of all yet sharer in all". He further speculates that the religion practiced by the rulers of the empire was a political religion derived from the older Iranian religion—a war religion—created for the kings (Cameron, 1948: 9).

We simply do not know the actual religious practice of Darius, and cannot state for a fact that the Achaemenids were practicing the Zoroastrian faith. What can be stated, with due attention to the available evidence, is that Darius definitely practiced some form of Mazda worship—one which may be associated with proto-Zoroastrianism, if anything-- and there may well be a continuity of practice between Cyrus and Darius, as attested by the evidence of fire in worship. However, this is as far as one can go in the interpretations without additional textual or archaeological evidence. It is perhaps best to abandon the question of what actual religious doctrine or dogma the early Persian kings followed, until more textual or archaeological evidence is discovered. Until that time, concentration

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[24] *Haoma*, Indic Soma, was used as an intoxicant in ancient Iranian religious practice, and is attested in the younger Avesta (Cameron, 1948: 5; cf. also Briant, 1996: 294). It was believed to have been prepared by grinding the stalk of the plant in a mortar and mixing it with various other ingredients to be fermented and imbibed (Cameron, *ibid*). See also Schmidt, 1970: 61f. regarding the Aramaic inscribed mortar possibly used for this purpose.

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on other questions related to religion—such as what gods were invoked or how religion was used to define a dynasty—can provide more fruitful results.

1.7. Religion as Propaganda

Darius' brand of rule could be labeled as a theocracy of sorts. The empire was, after all, ruled by the god Ahuramazda in a metaphoric sense. Darius was chosen to ruler by his god; and his entire rule was sanctioned "by the grace of Ahuramazda", as he so often asserts in his inscriptions. The concept of his deity was the fulcrum around which Darius turned. But can this automatically render the religion as mere propaganda, meant to bolster Darius' rule? It is true that Mazda worship was not forced upon the empire's populace, and in fact there were probably already a large number of Mazda worshippers in the region of greater Persia at the time. Just because Achaemenid religion was not forced upon the people of the empire, one cannot conclude, as Briant notes, that the religion of the court was political in conception (1997: 38).

It is true that the imagery which is associated with the architecture of the royal Achaemenid capitals expressed foremost the power of the Great King (Briant, 1997:32), but this is only one part of the message that was expressed in the art and architecture of Darius. The imagery of the empire elevates not only the king, but also his god. The two often come hand-in-hand. One can attempt to view the matter as visual manipulation, depending on the context. This would infer a separation between the ruler and his god in advantageous circumstances. But can a separation of religion and politics even be considered, as has been suggested by Duchesne Guillamine (1962) and Gnoli

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(1974:184)? This aspect of Darius' use of religion in his rule is an important issue to explore.

1.8. A Call for Contextualization

In addition to divergent views of what constituted religion in Achaemenid Persia or what it meant to the Great King, another issue is evident. Neglecting to contextualize the available archaeological evidence has caused some in the scholarly community to conflate the religions of Cyrus and Darius (Boyce, 1982; Briant, 1996: 106). The nature of religion and religious practice during the reigns of the Teispid rulers remains extremely ambiguous, not least in terms of what kind of religious dogma was officially practiced by the Great King as opposed to his subjects. One often committed mistake has been to use Darius' reign as an example for what all Achaemenid Persian kings believed (Gnoli, 1974:126, 131), and what their practices conveyed, from the presumed inception of Achaemenid rule c. 550 BCE (therefore labeling Cyrus as Achaemenid[25] and thus making the conflation possible[26]) to its abrupt end in 330 BCE at the hands of Alexander.

A thorough examination, however (Schwartz, 1985; Gershevitch, 1985) reveals a distinct number of differences between Darius' version of Mazdaism and that of his later successors (from Artaxerxes II onwards[27]). Therefore, how can we, with little evidence to link the religious practices dogmatically, take Darius' beliefs as those of his

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[25] As has Mallowan (1985) and many others.
[26] Briant in *Histoire* (1996) immediately sets up this conflation.
[27] Signaling, as some note a return to older Indo-Iranian religious practices—see Schwartz, 1985.

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predecessors (Cyrus, Cambyses and the line of Teispes) without some stronger proofs than those advanced to-date (such as the extraordinary similarities noted between the appearance of the fire altar in the funerary relief of Darius,[28] and that of a number of altar fragments found at Cyrus' capital city, Pasargadae[29])? The material manifestations of religious practice between the reigns of Cyrus II and Darius may need to be reconsidered not necessarily as evidence for one continuous religious practice, but perhaps more correctly as two different systems of belief,[30] and thus two ensuing practices, within the general Indo-Iranian religious model.

1.9. Summary

It is my intention in this study to help shed clarity on the complex interaction between the religion, culture, ethnicity and identity of Cyrus II, Cambyses II and Darius through a reevaluation of royal architecture, iconography and inscriptions in Persia between 550 and 486 BCE. Specifically, there will be a focus on how Darius chose to create and express his royal image. His premeditated use of the winged disk (as a symbol of Ahuramazda) to achieve this aim will be examined in particular.

In Chapter 2, the theoretical framework for considering issues of identity in the ancient historical record—specifically through expression of similarities or differences in

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[28] Schmidt, 1970 : pl. 19.
[29] Stronach, 1978: fig. 72.
[30] Kellens suggests (2002:456-7) "it is possible that the Teispids practiced a hybrid Mazdaism, mixed from their primitive religion, and entrusted their cults to the Magi. In this case, Darius may have wanted to impose a stricter orthodoxy, common to the Iranian peoples".

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ethnicity or religion--will be outlined, along with parameters of classification. In Chapter 3, the use and meaning of religious symbolism—specifically, the winged disk/symbol of Ahuramazda—in Achaemenid monumental art will be explored. In Chapter 4, evidence for the use of the winged disk in the glyptic of the chief administrative center of the Persian homeland (Persepolis) will be reviewed, and this use will be compared to its monumental use. In Chapter 5, evidence from the periphery (with reference to glyptic and to the portable arts) will be examined and contrasted with material from the center of power. In the concluding Chapter, the material under review will be contextualized in the temporal and geographic context of 6th-5th century BCE Persia, and its relationship to the imperial rulers of both the Teispid and Achaemenid lines will be revisited.

Chapter Two. Identity in the Archaeological Record of Ancient Iran

2.1. Introduction

The social landscape of Iran in the Iron Age was far from being culturally or ethnically uniform. In the course of the second millennium, and even slightly later, successive migrations of Indo-Iranian peoples continued to transform the sparse autochthonous settlements to a more diverse and more highly populated landscape. According to Sumner (1994: 103-5), it is possible that the Persians arrived from the north and east as early as in the Late Bronze Age, so that by c. 1600 they had reached the area of Parsa. This theory derives from certain abrupt ceramic changes that are visible in the local archaeological record. Most scholars take a more cautious view and date the arrival to c. 1000 BC onwards (Miroschedji, 1985: 292; c.f. Stronach, 2003: 133, who dates the arrival to c. 900 BC). In any event, from the 9th century onwards (as evidenced by Assyrian texts), Iranian tribes are known to have been in contact with sedentary peoples and their culture,[31] and, in the words of Gnoli, they then entered "their political orbit" (1974: 117).

There is ample archaeological evidence for Iron Age settlements in western Iran. These include Hasanlu IVb, which is customarily thought to date to between 1100 and 800 BC (cf. Dyson, 1965; 1989); the administrative and votive site of Surkh-Dum-i-Luri, in southern Luristan, which probably dates from the mid-8th to the mid-7th centuries BCE (Schmidt, Van Loon and Curvers, 1989: 489); and the Median sites of a) Tepe Nush-i

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[31] C.f. Frye, 1962: 56; Stronach, 2003: 133.

Jan, dating from the late 8th to early 6th century (cf. Stronach, 1969: 16; 1978: 11; and more recently, Stronach and Roaf, 2007); b) Godin Tepe, where the Median (or period II) occupation dates from the 7th to 6th centuries (Young, 1969; Young and Levine, 1974); and c) Ozbaki Tepe (cf. Majidzadeh, 2000, 2001; Stronach, 2003: 237-241). These document the presence of settlements with sometimes monumental architecture. However, the only major polity in southwestern Iran at the time was Elam. This historically and politically important region is where the Elamites had already been established for at least 1,500 years before the influx of Indo-Iranian tribes, as indicated by excavated evidence from, inter alia, Susa and Anshan.[32]

Not surprisingly, there is evidence of cultural intermixing (seen in both the archaeological and the onomastic evidence) and it can be said that culturally, linguistically and ethnically the population in southwestern Iran was in a state of flux, especially in the late 7th and early 6th centuries.[33] Elamites, Persians, and others came to constitute the mixed population in the area that would become the center of power for both Cyrus and Darius.[34]

There is no clear evidence during the period immediately preceding the rise of Cyrus II for a unified polity controlling the whole region of Fars (but see Waters, 2000; also Potts,

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[32] Potts has argued that there is no information as to whether the Elamites and the Persians ultimately stemmed from the same or entirely different ethnic sources (see Potts' discussion on this issue, 2005: 8-9). In historical terms, however, it is certainly possible to suggest that they emerged from very different backgrounds.

[33] Neo-Elamite Susa Acropole texts of the early 6th century list both Iranian and Elamite names (Henkelman, 2003: 212).

[34] Cf. Henkelman, 2003: 187.

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1999, for a somewhat contrasting interpretation). The situation may have been one of many smaller kingdoms vying for the little political power available (Stronach, 2003: 141). In terms of the local Persian population, it is known from onomastic evidence that the Persians inhabited the region of Fars from, at a minimum, the late 7th to the early 6th centuries BC onwards (Miroschedji, 2003; Henkelman, 2003). As potentially cohesive groups, or even as groups in the process of acculturation with the autochthonous population, Persians must have identified themselves through some visual or social cues (Briant, 1984a: 102), including language (as evidenced by the subsequent prominence of Old Persian inscriptions). Nevertheless, the various cultural or ethnic groups co-existed in the region, apparently without a dominant hegemony.[35]

As opaque as the political situation seems to have been in the early 6th century, some indication of the character of the competing groups comes from the inscriptions of Cyrus and Darius themselves. While much is left unsaid concerning the background of the two monarchs, that which was deemed sufficiently important to mention—in terms of their lineage—was made relatively clear through their own political proclamations. Cyrus identified himself as a descendant of Teispes, Great King of Anshan;[36] and Darius, as an Achaemenid and a Persian.[37] Their respective geneologies were publicly proclaimed, yet each appears to contain conflicting information (Fig. 2.1). In particular, Darius can be

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[35] Carter and Stolper theorize that, c. 691 BCE, the region of Fars (Parsa) was divided between at least 2 local polities (1984: 48).
[36] Pritchard, 1969: 316. Even in his Akkadian inscriptions, Cyrus is called "king of the lands of Anshan" (Vallat, 1997c: 426).
[37] Bisotun inscription, lines 3.1.7 (Kent, 1953: 119); DNa 2.8-15 (*ibid*: 138).

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seen to appropriate Teispes, the founder of Cyrus' line, into his own family tree.[38]

Indeed, if one goes so far as to take Darius at his word, it is possible to surmise that two

separate dynastic lines co-existed, or competed, in some form or other during the 7th and

6th century BCE (c.f. Stronach, 2003: 142).

2.2. The 'Teispid Anshanite' and the 'Achaemenid Persian'

Who were the Teispids—the rulers listed in the geneology of Cyrus? Who was

Achaemenes, the eponymous founder of the lineage of Darius? Did they spring from

different cultures and political backgrounds? It is intriguing to speculate on these

questions, but very difficult to arrive at definitive answers. Darius, perhaps taking

advantage of Cyrus' relatively short list of royal ancestors, boldly claimed that Cyrus,

like himself, was descended from Achaemenes,[39] and was thus no more than an earlier

heir to the same common heritage (Kellens, 2002:418-19). Yet Cyrus, a self-described

"King of Anshan" makes no reference to Achaemenes (Berger 1975: 197,1.21).

Indeed, various scholars have recently argued that Cyrus was not an Achaemenid *at all*,

and should perhaps be described as, a) an ethnically *Persian* king ruling in the Anshan

region, an area traditionally associated with the Elamites (Miroschedji 1985:298-9;

Briant, 1996:27; Stronach, 2000:684); or, b) an ethnically-mixed or acculturated partly-

Elamite, partly-Persian king, [40] or, c) that Cyrus was none other than an Elamite king (this

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[38] DBI.2.1.3-6 (Kent, 1953: 119).
[39] DNa, lines 14-15 (Kent, 1953: 138).
[40] Kellens, 2002:427, posits that "the Iranisation of the Teispids was largely accomplished by the time of Cyrus II". Cf. also Rollinger 1999; Miroschedji, 2003; and

idea was first articulated a little over a century ago by Andreas, 1904; and, more recently, by Potts, 2005). These various arguments, while striving to come closer to the truth behind Cyrus' lineage, ultimately serve only to lead us in rhetorical circles; and given the extant evidence, it is impossible to be certain of Cyrus' exact cultural or ethnic heritage. Our only real clarity on the issue is that Darius claims a Persian/Iranian heritage very publicly; yet Cyrus never once mentions these particular origins. If Cyrus were a Persian (a view that seems to be the most accepted in scholarship), he did not feel the pressing need to publicly proclaim this aspect of his identity. This renders the reason why Darius felt the obvious need to proclaim his Persian identity even more crucial to understanding the ethnic or dynastic interplay occurring in this region at the time. Regardless of their potential genealogical ties or differences, Cyrus II and Darius focused on quite different aspects of their heritage, and their respective concepts of the identity of rulership. The reasons may be due to factors we may never understand.

While this issue of "ethnic" identity and potential dynastic competition may seem almost politically inconsequential to the cohesion of the Persian empire over a span of about 200 years, it may actually have been a much more important issue to Darius than has previously been imagined.[41] It must be remembered that, even while Darius attempted to

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Henkelman, 2003 for further explorations on the acculturation process between Elamites and Persians in the early 6th century BCE. Also, Kellen's view (2002:426) that nomadic clans in highland S.W. Iran were only partly Elamite or Iranian in ethnic terms.

[41] Kellens (2002:427) suggests that Darius came from a family that was "nationalist". At the very least he might be viewed as holding a deep understanding of what was needed to consolidate power in Fars. Whether or not there was much difference in "ethnicity" between the Anshanites and the Persians by the late 6th century BCE, we do know that

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connect his lineage with that of Cyrus in order to justify his seizure of the throne, he nevertheless emphasized a different political and cultural identity, along with a seemingly new stress on his faith (which may or may not have been the same as that of Cyrus), clearly demarcating his own royal image from that of the old guard. In so far as all the extant archaeological evidence is concerned, Darius is the first king to use the dynastic name *Haxamanishya*—Achaemenid—in an official, written capacity, and to lay claim to an "Aryan" (i.e. Iranian) lineage (DNa, lines 14-15, Kent, 1953:138).

As the evidence is reviewed, it becomes clear that both ethnicity and religion were crucial to Darius' political image and his vision of an empire unified under its rightful heir.[42] While we do not know what exactly comprised the difference between the lines of Cyrus and that of Darius, it is clear that a difference was being played up in the rhetoric and iconography of the latter ruler. Apparently, this was more advantageous for an as yet obscure reason. And as intriguing as it may be to attempt a clarification of the problem, it is not an easy task. For this reason, if we are to elucidate more clearly how Darius saw and expressed himself as ruler, it is of great necessity to examine and define as best as we can these two aspects of his identity in a theoretical manner. But what is the best way to elucidate Achaemenid identity (via ethnicity and religion) in the archaeological record? What can even be considered evidence for the determination of a cultural or political

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intense acculturation had been occurring in Fars for quite some time (c.f. Henkelman, 2005).

[42] Gnoli (1974: 162) posits that the Persians were part of a tribal social organization based on blood ties and lineage, where the clan's position was predominant in the power structure.

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identity? And how does one define identity, in any case? One needs a definition, and for a definition, one needs a theoretical framework.

2.3. Advocating a Theoretical Framework

To get to the meaning of, and the intent behind, the change in ideology and identity between Cyrus and Darius, we need to examine the evidence in a contextual manner within its historical, temporal and physical reality. As Meskell posits, "cultural material lessens the tendency to project our categories and notions to ancient cultures"(1999: 218). We may see what we want to see; however, reading a 'chain of signs' (i.e., connected objects) will give us a clearer picture than if the sign (object) is isolated from its context.

A very large part of the material in this study to be reviewed is symbolically or iconographically based. According to Braithewaite (1982: 81), analysis of the context of use of decoration [i.e., iconography] may inform us as to how it is used in ideology and power relationships. In doing so, she points out the importance of viewing the symbolic material in terms of its relationship to other factors, such as those that are geographic, historic and material. In this regard, Hodder states (1986b: 122), "artifacts are silent when they are out of their texts"[i.e., context]. Contextualism, therefore, is necessary for appropriate interpretation of archaeological material—no semiotic form of material manifestation, text or action can have meaning on its own (Thiebault, 1991). Particularly pertinent to this very issue, the theory that I advocate for this study—'contextualism' or 'interpretive archaeology'—is a post-processual method that takes into account these variables.

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2.3.1.Post-Processualism and Contextuality

The idea of a post-processual methodology was first articulated by Hodder in 1984; and several years later he also introduced the ensuing theoretical framework of contextualism (itself a form of post-processual archaeology)(1987a). Hodder's post-processual methodology was a response to structuralism and processual archaeology, or the "new archaeology" (Preucel, 2006: 93-94). Processual archaeology traditionally embraces a systemic view of culture (*ibid*); and the methods encompassed under this heading (cognitive, environmental, Marxist and others, c.f. Preucel 2006: 96) can be either theoretical or methodologically centered. But there are failings to this method of analysis, at is it tends to be somewhat positivist, monothetic or inflexible. It cannot comfortably be applied to each situation or set of data.

Post-processual archaeology(ies), which came out of Post-structuralism, in contrast, rejects monothetic and deterministic approaches to archaeology and instead utilizes discourse, subjectivity, gender and identity (Preucel, 2006: 122). These archaeologies include: contextual, critical, engendered, indigenous, interpretive and social archaeologies (*ibid*: 123).[43] In particular, post- processual archaeology embraces the hermeneutic [i.e., interpretive] methods of analysis (Meskell, 1999), and can be a flexible tool when a less empirical approach is more advantageous to the analysis of a given set of data. Within the model of contextual archaeology, Hodder identifies 3 types of meaning:

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[43] For further reading in post-processual archaeologies, see: for *contextual*, Barrett, 1987; Hodder, 1982b, 1987a; *critical*, Leone et al, 1987; Shanks and Tilley, 1987a; *engendered*, Gero and Conkey, 1991; Gilchrist, 1999; *indigenous*, Watkins, 2000; Smith and Wobst, 2005; *interpretive*, Hodder, 1991; Hodder *et al*, 1995; Tilley, 1993; Thomas, 2000; *social archaeology*, Meskell and Preucel, 2004; Meskell *et al*, 2001.

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functional, structural and historical (1987b: 1; c.f. Preucel, 2006: 126), and these must all be acknowledged. This is in contrast to processual archaeology, which may only allow for one type of interpretation.

To Hodder, there are different ways of "doing science", and therefore different problems need different types of argument (1991: 38). Post-processual archaeologists search for diversity and the dissolution of barriers or dichotomies, so that argument (and different viewpoints) can be part of the process (*ibid*). Shanks and Tilley (1992: 114) suggest that archaeology should be a hermeneutic or interpretive practice, and that this kind of practice can be reflexive (critical of itself)(*ibid*). Because of multi-vocality or multiplicity, Hodder and Preucel (1996: 3) posit that [archaeological] interpretations are always incomplete, anyway. The meaning is not inherent in the object itself, but in the chain of signifiers that connect to the other 'texts' [i.e., objects]. In other words, the context is necessary to evaluate the chain of signifiers and construct a history. Within this study, disparate types of signifiers will be connected (seals, reliefs, texts) in order to construct as complete a historical analysis as possible.

2.4. Identity and Ethnicity in the Archaeological Record

As aforementioned, the issue of identity in the archaeological record is an important one for this topic of research. How does one describe allegiance to a specific identity? Identity is not a constant or well-defined aspect of self. Rather, it is a dialectic between self, context and human experience. In other words, it has the capacity for continuous transformation depending on whom we are with, or where we are (socially, temporally,

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geographically). There are myriad ways we can—and do—construct and define our identities. It is through language, culture, nationality, bloodline, politics, sexual orientation and religion, to name but a few. We act as creators of our own identity in the choices we make and the actions that follow, and in relation or in response to other people and things[44]—far from being powerless in the process, each individual has agency in the formation of his or her own self-definition. This potential for multiplicity in identity extends from the individual to society itself: Meskell notes that studies show that no human population is confined within a single system, but instead in a "multiplicity of only partly coalescing organizations, collectives and systems" (1999: 140). These systems, of which we are part, affect our identity according to context. And yet there is a desire to categorize ourselves, and those around us (literally, "the other"), into neat, seemingly clear-cut definitions—such as those represented by the terms 'ethnicity' or 'religion'. However, these categories of individual, identifiable features of a person are not so clear-cut. Let us examine these concepts below.

2.4.1. Ethnicity

The term "ethnicity" has been used historically to describe individual or group identity. It is a word that derives from the Greek word "ethnos".[45] It originally meant nation or people (*ibid*), but has come to signify a way of identifying oneself from other groups based on culture, race or language. In the 19th century, ethnicity could be viewed as

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[44] Marian Feldman notes that this process is not solely self-generated (personal communication, April, 2009).
[45] Ethnic: of or relating to large groups of people classed according to a common racial, national, tribal, religious, linguistic, or cultural origin or background (definition in Webster's, 1988: 427).

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something congenital—it was easier to group people according to race or bloodline than to examine other aspects of self.[46] But 19th century ideas of ethnicity as being innate or congenital seem less tenable when one considers the view that ethnicity is a consciously constructed social classification (Morris, 1998: 273).

In the 20th century, V. Gordon Childe suggested that ethnicity was not something inherent in the individual, but was rather a combination between people, language and archaeological culture (Childe, 1933: 417). In 1969, Barth outlined a general definition of ethnicity to be a group which: 1) is largely biologically self-perpetuating; 2) shares fundamental cultural values; 3) makes up fields of communication and interaction; and, 4) has membership which identifies itself as a distinguishable category from others of the same order (Barth, 1969: 10-11).

Cordell and Yannie (1991: 97) caution, however, that 'number 4' on Barth's list is difficult for archaeologists to deal with properly, as archaeologically it is seldom possible to know how the "actors" (or persons studied) identified themselves or others. Part of this problem is a result of the confusion an archaeologist can have about an assemblage, especially if the method for defining ethnic groups stems from searching for "overt unity of cultural forms"(*ibid*). One example Cordell and Yannie use to illustrate this particular problem is the misinterpretation of a general state of poverty in the material record as a

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[46] Cf. Taguieff, 1987: 4.

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cultural or ethnic unity (*ibid*).[47] In other words, if a community uses a particular

unpainted pottery type, is it for economic or cultural reasons? This will not always be

apparent in the archaeological record.

The problem with defining ethnicity in the archaeological record seems to be that it is

erroneous to assume a one-to-one relationship between cultural similarities and ethnicity

(Barth, 1969: 14). For example, ecology is a factor that can determine different social

outcomes for two groups of the same ethnicity (*ibid*: 11-13). Likewise, groups of

different ethnicity may have similar material manifestations of culture (through emulation

or simply acculturation).

At present, particularly with the work of Sian Jones (1997) defining ethnicity has become

a question of defining self-ascribed identity in order to be differentiated from other

groups. This is done through "subjective, symbolic or emblematic use of any aspect of

culture" (Jones, 1997:62). Hall (1997:36) has posited that "an ethnic group should be

defined as a social collectivity whose members are united by the subscription to a

putative as opposed to genealogical belief in shared descent and to an association with a

primordial homeland". To Emberling (1995:4) it is more a question of people living and

acting together as a group (c.f. also Barth, 1969: 10). Adding another dimension to the

discussion, Meskell states that it is the *body* that "constitutes the locus of identity, self

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[47] For more discussion on how archaeological material cannot be correlated in any direct
or immediate manner with ethnicity, see Clarke, 1968; Binford, 1973; Hodder, 1978; and
Renfrew, 1978.

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and agency" (1999: 224). It is apparent that these multiple views on the matter each carry validity, and may need to be factored into any analysis of the subject.

The idea of identity itself—how one defines oneself or how one defines a collective group—appears flexible and redefinable. Thus, 'ethnicity' has become a subjective concept (Renfrew, 1998: 275), and no longer holds the same value in defining the "other" as previously. This fluidity in defining self, and thus associated ethnicity, has been described by Emberling (1995:13) as "situational ethnicity", where people display ethnic identity differentially according to political and social context. As Barth notes, membership into a particular group can be based on social factors—such as the willingness to be treated as the member of one particular group, as opposed to another (1969: 15). To Barth, it is the boundary that becomes important, not the "cultural stuff it encloses"(*ibid*). We may not be born within a particular social boundary, but if we live and act within it, then we become at least partly enclosed by it.

Taking these views into consideration, as an exercise in contextuality, one can examine Darius' stated ethnicity (Persian-Iranian) and wonder if it was putative, or ascribed. Did he insist on his Persianness because, perhaps, he in actuality was not, but wanted to be viewed as such for political advantage? Could not this view be equally valid as previous ruminations that question the Persianness of Cyrus II? Or, perhaps we are left with a case where, indeed, Cyrus, already known and accepted as a Persian, need lay no claim to such. Darius' insistence on the matter (of being Persian) may have been a way to further separate their elite Persian/Iranian background from others of the empire to guarantee

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continued power. As Barth posits, continuity of ethnic units (i.e., identity) depends on maintenance of boundary (1969: 14). Likewise, ethnic identity determines the kinds of roles an individual can play in society (*ibid*: 17). It is very possible that Darius was continuing to strengthen the boundaries of power already laid out by Cyrus, a boundary based on "Persianness." In sum, the whole question of Cyrus' and Darius' actual ethnicities becomes less relevant than their ability to fit into the dominant power structure of the empire. This power structure seems to have been controlled mainly by Persians[48] during Darius' rule, and he needed to be seen as such.

2.4.2. Communicating Ethnicity through a Symbolic Code

How was this dominant Persian-Achaemenid ethnic/cultural group expressed in the material record? Partly, it was through a symbolic code. Often, symbolism is used as a tool to differentiate groups. Hodder categorizes material culture meanings into 5 categories: 3 simple forms (indices, signals and icons), and 2 complex forms (symbol and metaphor)(1987b: 2-3). This gives material culture the means to express multiple meanings in multiple ways. It was Bordieu who posited (1979) that a symbolic system has 3 functions: as a means of communicating, as an instrument for the knowledge and construction of the objective world, and as an instrument of domination by establishing and legitimating the dominant culture (Shanks and Tilley, 1982: 132; c.f. Braithwaite, 1982: 80). Braithwaite further suggests that messages that sustain relationships of power can be expressed in "overt, explicit idiom" (*ibid*). For Braithwaite, symbols have the

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[48] Note the Persian names of the court nobles who gave support to Darius when he usurped the throne of Persia. Their ethnicity is clearly marked in the Bisotun relief, contra the 'non-Persian' enemies (columns II- IV).

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ability to express ideas, and also guide and affect action. So, as opposed to just controlling relationships and upholding the status quo, symbols also influence or instigate. They are not just passively placed in the environment (c.f. Preucel, 2006: 141).

For this reason, symbols can be used to sustain social differentiation and hierarchy in a society (Miller, 1982: 89), or even to unify disparate significata (*ibid*: 134). Ultimately, the meaning ascribed to a symbol in a given context is not arbitrary, but 'relational' (*ibid*: 132). As posited by Shanks and Tilley (1982: 132) symbols "may become instruments for a particular construction and manipulation of the social world." In the Achaemenid world, many different peoples and cultures had to become united as one polity. Therefore, it was necessary for the empire to develop its own symbolic language with which to identify and unify. Within this symbolic language, nevertheless, there was a symbolic boundary drawn around the Achaemenid Persians.

2.5. Religion as a Marker of Identity

In the case of Darius, part of this new symbolic language included a stress on religion and religious symbolism, used to represent his cultural or dynastic identity. The use of religious symbolism is a particularly effective way for a group to reify or differentiate itself from others. One need only observe the current international political divisions stemming from differing religious adherences. However, this differentiation may be very subtle in the material record. Exactly what material evidence can be considered religious in nature? How is religion used to express identity? Beyond seemingly explicit references in the archaeological record—such as inscriptions naming divinities or providing

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theophoric names, or the presence of expressly religious iconography—the parameters are vague.

In discussing religion, the initial hurdle is to determine how to define what can be considered as "religious" in any given society. As Insoll (2004:1-5) has stressed, the attempt to define religion in theoretical or scientific terms has been thoroughly unsuccessful in modern scholarship, and any effort to do so has been largely ignored or abandoned in recent years. The difficulty in arriving at an acceptable definition lies in the impossibility of dealing in a fully syncratic way with the many existing views of what actually constitutes religion. As noted by Glazier (1998:24), there is simply no single, uniform theory of what constitutes religion. Accordingly, there is no common methodology for its study.

One facet of the difficulty in question is the lack of consistency in the terminology that is used to describe the concept of religion. Often, words such as magic, ritual, cult, shamanism, sacred, spiritual or the numinous are used interchangeably when referring to the concept. Yet if it is not known what constitutes religion or religious worship, how can one recognize the material manifestations of the same? Need there even be any physical evidence for religion? How does one describe those aspects of religion which cannot be physically manifested (such as the numinous)? This inherent ambiguity surrounding the concept of religion is, of course, what makes it very difficult to pinpoint what material can be considered evidence for religious practice in the archaeological record. Even so, religion remains a highly important element in the attempt to analyze

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any part of the past, and the question of religion's existence and its manifestations in the material world need to be dealt with in as open and synthetic a manner possible.[49]

2.5.1. Defining Religion

The first anthropological studies of religion began in the 19th century with the work of Max Muller, W. Robertson Smith, Edward B. Tylor and Sir James Frazer (Glazier, 1998:23). These scholars were the first to suggest that it was possible to study "tribal" religions (rather, that which we cannot define as a "world" or codified religion)[50] following set rules of scientific method, although they were unable to proffer a particular methodology. In Tylor's view, for example, religion could be defined as "the belief in spirit beings" (Tylor, 1871). Yet these vague and subjective analyses did not offer criteria for defining religion.

Those who have attempted definitions of religion have suggested various ways of describing the concept. Geertz (1973:90) defines religion as: 1) a system of symbols which acts to, 2) establish powerful, pervasive and long-lasting moods and motivations in men by, 3) formulating conceptions of a general order of existence, and, 4) clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that, 5) the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic. To Flannery and Marcus (1996: 353) religion is defined as "a specific

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[49] As a complete history and analysis of religious theory and philosophy is not the goal of this study, a few of the more important points surrounding the theory of religion will be mentioned in order to lay a foundation for the contextual approach I hope to incorporate.
[50] For more on the classification of world religions versus traditional or primal religions, see Bowie, 2002; Insoll, 2004.

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set of beliefs in a divine or superhuman power or powers, to be obeyed and worshipped as the creators or rulers of the universe." However, ultimately any definition is and will be incomplete.

Along with a theoretical definition, it is important to understand how to identify material manifestations of the same. Renfrew tackles the problem of defining what can be considered religious in the archaeological record through establishing a system of indicators of ritual, which can then signify religious practice within the archaeological record (1994:47-52). These markers include: a) the focusing of attention through devices and redundancy of symbols, b) the concept of a boundary zone between the material world and the other, c) the presence of a deity, and d) participation and offering (1994:51-52). In other words, religion in the archaeological record is the evidence for repeated actions of a symbolic nature directed towards non-terrestrial or non-human and therefore transcendent forces (Renfrew, 1994: 52). These forces can perhaps be considered as defining the "sacred."

Although useful to a degree, the guidelines suggested by Renfrew nevertheless do not completely solve the question of what to consider 'religious'. If one compares Renfrew's markers to Achaemenid palace reliefs and their ensuing iconography, one might very well consider the repetitive image of the winged disk as fulfilling all four requirements—a) one's attention is focused through redundancy; b) these images occur often on the liminal or boundary zone of doorways; c) the winged disk is the representative of a deity; and d) there are elements of participating and offering in the

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images of arriving tributaries carved into the stone orthostats on the stairs of various structures. However, the images (as will be further reviewed in Ch. 2) are not exemplary of a religious ritual, *per se*. Insoll (2004:5) also renders Renfrew's checklist less universal when he asks: do we only consider that which conforms to a predetermined checklist of material "definitely religious in intent," or do we include that which may have been in use while religious thoughts were being entertained? Checklists rarely have universal applicability (Lane, 2001:150), and therefore cannot be the sole deciding factor in criteria selection. For example, Shamanism (as described by Pearson, 2002) is associated with the mystical, magical and sacred, which are components of religious practice or belief as described by Renfrew. But, as Shamanism is rooted in the natural world, there may be no traces of a materially manifested practice that would fit into Renfrew's checklist.[51] According to Pearson (2002:70), for the ancients, all power was rooted in the natural order. Therefore, the mysterious and magical were part of the environment, and the supernatural was entirely natural. In this situation, there may be no evidence of a differentiation between practice and day to day living.

A similar situation arises for magic. Frazer (1935) constructs an interesting relationship between magic and religion, arguing that human thought was best understood as a progression from magic, to religion, to science. In more advanced societies, magic is replaced by religion (*ibid*). But, as has been observed (Kingsley, 1994:193), the lines

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[51] As an example, ancient Iranian religious phenomena was linked in the 1930's to shamanism (Kingsley, 1994). There is an apparent focus on natural elements in Achaemenid religion—outdoor worship and the use of fire—however, Briant (1997:33) considers a categorization of shamanism for Achaemenid religion as too narrow.

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between magic and religion are vague and often indefinable. In terms of material manifestation, that which relates to the sacred, magic or numinous (that which cannot be manifested) is often unclear or non-existent. As such, the boundaries remain unclear and embeddedness of the sacred within daily life is a major hindrance to the proper analysis of assemblages. And while it is true that simply dealing with the obvious may skew our perceptions of the matter, imagining that meaning existed where in fact it may have been absent is hardly a better situation. In preferring to err on the side of caution, in this analysis I focus on that which remains at the very least *suggestive* (in terms of iconography and material remains) as symbolic of a numinous message.

More obviously, identification of what material to contextualize in this study could potentially include iconography that is specifically ritualistic or religious (such as a seal impression depicting priests before a fire altar or a *haoma* pestle); and, in general, these can conform to Renfrew's checklist. However, ambiguous imagery or objects which may carry a message which may be termed mystical/spiritual/ritualistic (such as images of the "royal hero", which has a long tradition in Mesopotamia as relating to royal ritual, power and possibly the metaphysical world)--but which do not conform to traditional views of that which is sacred--can also be considered as useful in such a study. So, what symbols take precedence over others in terms of importance? What may seem the most important to the archaeologist may not have been particularly important in its original context.

As such, the symbolic or iconographic aspect of material evidence can be misleading. An example of the confusing nature of symbolic language and its intended meaning can be

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seen within the context of 6th century BCE Persian architecture, where apotropaic imagery is used throughout the royal Achaemenid palaces and institutions. These are manifest in the forms of Lamassu, lions, rosettes, sphinxes, and winged geniuses. Iconography of this kind can be variously identified at Pasargadae, Susa, Persepolis and Naqsh-i Rustam. Traditionally, in Mesopotamia, the use of such imagery is associated with the protective power of Mesopotamian gods such as Ishtar, Marduk or other beneficent creatures, and the existence of such imagery in a royal context in Achaemenid Persia could potentially refer to the same apotropaic messages that had obtained in Babylonia and Assyria. Nevertheless, one should also consider the very real possibility that iconography taken out of its original context has the capacity to transform its message, and may not carry precisely the same meaning as that originally prescribed (Amiet, 1997:83; Schwartz, 1985: 666—see also ch. 3, pp. 52-57). Symbolic meaning can change according to syncretism, fusion or rejection (Insoll, 2004:137). Perhaps it is more important, in other words, to examine the ways in which symbols were used in a social context, as they were found to be needed to cope with different aspects of human existence (Renfrew, 1994). Issues to consider regarding the analysis of symbolic meaning, including embeddedness in the archaeological record, are further reviewed below.

2.5.2. Embeddedness in the Archaeological Record

Not only can symbolic meaning change according to context, but there is also the question of the embeddedness of said evidence within the material context. To Renfrew, the biggest problem with locating religious practice in the archaeological record is the

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problem of embeddedness of ritual or cult activity within other, more mundane activities of daily life (1994: 47). What may have been religious or sacred in the past may not immediately be apparent in the archaeological record. Further, as religion in many cases is inextricably found in various aspects of human culture, religion must be viewed as part of other "socio-cultural phenomena and processes" (Bardsley, 2004: 17). Indeed, to separate religion, much as many modern western societies do, from daily activity may simply not be practical in defining a society whose entire social, religious, scientific and philosophical paradigms may have been different from our own, and one needs to search for another model.[52] Even the use of the term "religion" poses a problem when examining the archaeological record. Simply using the term to describe the practices, actions, rituals, beliefs and material culture of an ancient people creates a separation between what is defined as "religious" and what is not when, in reality, these divisions may not have existed (Insoll, 2004: 6). Could not, then, as mundane an activity as pouring a glass of wine be 'religious' if the intent behind it is part of a ritual celebrating the numinous?

There is also an unclear relationship between ritual and religion. Religion was described by Jonathan Smith (1980: 114) as routine actions (or rituals) which serve as a "focusing lense" for that which is sacred, holy or hallowed. But this association reduces religion to ritual actions, and *de facto* associates ritual with religion when there could be very different intentions behind routine action. The term "Ritual" is used almost as an interchangeable definition for religion, or as a materially manifest aspect of religion when

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[52] In this case, perhaps it is helpful to look to current attitudes towards world religions, which do not necessarily practice separation of religion and state—such as in the Islamic republic of Iran—for an anthropological model.

it really should be described as just an aspect of the concept (Insoll, 2004:12). Perhaps more clearly, ritual should be described as "the fundamental unit of religious expression and the building blocks for all religions" (Glazier, 1998: 25), although they cannot be strictly limited to this purpose. To Barrett (1996: 396-7) ritual is made up of actions, not things, and he disputes the existence of "ritual sites" or "ritual objects." Accordingly, although an archaeologist might equate symbolic deposits with ritual, Barrett is quick to note that "symbolism pervades all areas of life" (*ibid*).

Aside from relating religion to the sacred, to ritual, shamanism, cult or magic, one more important facet of its definition must be noted. We are attempting to define how religion was expressed in the archaeological record, but we must also be aware of how it was perceived by the very ancient cultures we are examining. There is, for example, a clear association of religion with power and politics (Kemp, 1995). Certainly, in the history of the ancient Near East, there are countless examples of the intimate association of the ruler with the temple or with deities,[53] or even with the ruler viewed as a deity.[54] Accordingly, we cannot simply restrict our search for religious practice to temples and that which is directly related to the sacred. We may need to include that which appears to be secular in order to understand something of the relationship between king and god. Or, in the words of Parker Pearson (1984b: 71), "artifacts cannot simply be categorized according to economic, social or ideological criteria: a hoe may be as ideological as a law code.

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[53] Ranging from associations between king or ruler and temple as expressed on the Warka Vase; or of king as priest in Babylonia and Assyria, as expressed in both text and royal art.
[54] Naram-Sin, ruler of Akkad, had himself deified (Kuhrt, 1995: 5).

Institutions may embody the social, economic and ideological; the economy conversely may be considered religious or ideological practice". As we will see (Ch. 5, pp. 179-185), even temple economy and administration can be closely associated to the crown.

Insoll insists that religion should be approached as "a possible component underlying all material culture use and meaning" (2004:5). If religion can indeed be so embedded in daily activity that a clear separation cannot be made in the material record between the secular and nonsecular, then it is impossible to absolutely define religious practice in the archaeological record. However, what the material record can do—if not define the practice in question—is implicate items used in ritual, or betray visual manifestations of said numinous beings (such as iconography and symbols) or even their associated names (inscriptions). For the Achaemenid period, there are certainly material manifestations of religious belief and practice, however the difficulties in ascribing any particular definition to the religion(s) have been outlined previously (chapter 2). As the point of this thesis is not to define Achaemenid religion or its practice, but to define religion's place as a key building block[55] in the construction of royal   Achaemenid identity, the focus of the following four chapters will be on the iconographic and symbolic aspects of this issue.

2.6. Methodology

Using the post-processual theoretical framework of contextualism as a foundation, the following chapters will compare the material remains (texts and monumental art) from the reign of Darius the Great, with similar material from the reigns of Cyrus II and his

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[55] Insoll (2004: 5) outlines the importance of religion as a foundation of identity.

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son and heir, Cambyses II. The material will be viewed with the following question in mind: how was religious symbolism used to create a distinctly different expression of dynastic identity between the reign of Cyrus, the Teispid, on the one hand, and that of Darius, the Achaemenid, on the other? This contrast in dynastic identity will be contextualized within the cultural, social, political and religious landscape of the 6th-5th centuries in Persia. The material to be examined will be comprehensive in breadth and type, ranging from seals and their impressions to monumental architecture; however, within these somewhat flexible boundaries there will be a distinct focus on that which the present writer views as being most reflective of Darius' royal dynastic identity—his association with the deity Ahuramazda, and his use of the symbol of the winged disk.

The material under review will be connected to the depiction of this symbol and deity; and the invocation of the god Ahuramazda. Most importantly, all material used in this study will have firm provenance. "Floating objects" cannot be contextualized, and for this reason a great number of seals,[56] for example, cannot be included in this study.

2.7. Summary

The important issue to focus on within this study is not a decipherment of the cultural or ethnic make-up of Cyrus and Darius—rather, it is in understanding that for Darius, a clear elite identity was important enough to create, and repetitively reiterate, both rhetorically and visually, as a vital manifestation of his rule. In doing so, even those of different

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[56] The British Museum publication authored by P. Merrilees lists only 3 out of 92 seals as having a firm provenance (2005: ix).

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cultural, tribal, geographic or religious backgrounds could understand Darius's royal message: because of godly intervention, a new dynasty (of rightful heirs) was now in control of the empire. The heavy-handed promotion of a readily identifiable deity (perhaps already much-loved and revered by certain cultural or ethnic groups inhabiting the region[57]) could act as a unifying symbol, something that those who chose to identify themselves as either Achaemenid, Persian or Iranian could thus adopt as a 'cultural cue' (c.f. Barth, 1969: 35).

This symbolic cue could help the Persian elite to create and retain a boundary of control from which to lead the empire and legitimate control over territory and resources (cf. Jones, 1998: 272). As a new elite group coming to power, the Achaemenid dynasty may not have been particularly distinctive before Darius seized the Teispid throne. At least there are no material manifestations of their pre-Imperial past. But as this new elite group's political influence rose, its ethnic identity appears to have been thrown into sharper relief and duly codified (cf. Emberling, 1995: 6-90, for a discussion on the particular relationship between state and identity).

This new royal identity (Achaemenid-Persian-Iranian) was delineated through symbols, distinctive language and material culture.[58] These new symbols of power and dynastic, ethnic and cultural division (such as the royal advertisement of the Mazda-worshipping

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[57] Schwartz (1985) points out that early Indo-Iranian religious traditions existed before even the reign of Cyrus, as evidenced in the Avesta, which would have pre-dated any possible formalized religious changes made by Darius.
[58] Emberling, 1995: 235, undertakes an important discussion of the place of symbols, distinctive language and material culture in the expression of power.

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religion), were used over a period of nearly two hundred years to distinguish the Achaemenid elite from the more than 28 different peoples of the empire, and from those even beyond such boundaries.[59] In particular, one symbol in the Persian homeland came to represent the Achaemenid dynasty *par excellence*: the winged disk. In the following chapters, we will explore how this symbol was used, and the variations that can be detected in such usage in both the empire's nucleus and in its peripheral regions.

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[59] Shanks and Tilley (1987a: 26) have theorized that identity presupposes differences from something else. Darius' Persianness was sharply contrasted against the various ethnic components of his empire.

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Chapter Three. The Winged Disk in Monumental Achaemenid Art

3.1 Introduction

In chapter one, the role of religion in the construction and maintenance of political or group identity was explored, with special reference to the context of ancient Iran. As I have sought to show, religion and its associated symbolism can be deeply enmeshed with issues of ethnic and cultural identity, and it can be used as a powerful tool to reify the existence, for example, of a single group among many others. An outstanding example of how religious symbolism came to be used as a way to demarcate a particular social group—in this case the Persian ruling class—is found in the art of the Achaemenid empire during the reign of Darius the Great (522-486 BCE). Within this geographically far-reaching, multi-lingual empire,[60] there were, of course, many separate deities, each with their own associated symbolism.[61] In this religious climate, the Achaemenid ruling class was able to assert its unique cultural and political identity through, among other things, the use of the evocative symbol of the winged disk. This singular symbol, itself one of the most striking in Achaemenid art,[62] represented an easily recognizable motif that became a dynastic marker of sorts for Darius and his successors.[63]

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[60] Wiesehofer, 1996: 7; Potts, 2005: 8.

[61] Including, for example, Marduk in Babylon, and Re in Egypt (for a comprehensive list of deities, demons and their symbols in the ancient Mesopotamia, see especially Black and Green, 1992).

[62] Roaf, 1983: 133.

[63] Roaf (1983b: 186) notes that the earliest adequately preserved examples of the winged disk at Persepolis date from the time of Xerxes onwards—one of several factors that demonstrate the continued vitality of the symbol in question after its introduction by Darius.

Above all, this time-honored symbol was used to lend legitimacy to the new dynasty as one sanctioned by a powerful god. In its two main forms the symbol could manifest itself as a simple disk,[64] or as a disk with an emergent, crowned bust, [65] suspended in space in each case by a pair of wings. Even with the pre-eminence given to the symbol in terms of its association with the royal family, there are nevertheless numerous other religious, mythical or numinous[66] symbols manifest in the material record of the art of the Persian empire. An exploration of the full range of examples is beyond the scope of this thesis. Accordingly, while it would not be without interest to enumerate all the numinous symbols found in Achaemenid art, this study will focus only on the winged disk—by far the most politically charged of the symbols used in Darius' visual program, and one of the most consistently promoted in the royal art of the Persian heartland.

There has been much speculation as to the identification, and thus the intended meaning, of the winged disk in an Achaemenid context.[67] From its invariable, non-terrestrial character, it is clear that the symbol belongs to the metaphysical world. When used, the symbol is often shown "hovering" above a scene in a relatively central location (cf. Root, 1979: 177). On at least one occasion it also bears the clear marks of divinity, as expressed in ancient Near Eastern art. In its earliest Achaemenid manifestation at Bisotun, for example, the crown of the god is not only marked by horns of divinity but also by an

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[64] As exemplified by the brick friezes of Susa. For illustrations, see Harper et al, 1992: 229, fig. 157.

[65] The best examples hail from Bisotun (Wiesehofer, 1996: pl. I) and Naqsh-i Rustam (Schmidt, 1970: pl. I).

[66] Cf. Chapter 1: Introduction; and Chapter 3.

[67] Shahbazi (1980) and Root (1979) are two scholars who give very different appraisals of the symbol's identity. See pp. 52-57 below.

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ancient circular device with divine associations.[68] As the symbol of a deity, the winged

disk is a visual anchor representing a religious belief system integral to the very identity

of the Achaemenid kings.[69] The symbol was used in the iconography of both the

monumental arts (i.e. in reliefs) and in the portable arts (notably, in seals and jewelry).

The present chapter addresses the problematic issues of who or what the icon represents,

how it was used in Achaemenid iconography in the monumental arts,[70] and why it

represented such an important element within the visual program of Darius and his

successors.[71]

3.2. The Origins of the Winged Disk

The winged disk was a remarkably popular symbol in Egypt and the ancient Near East as

a whole, and was both geographically and temporally widespread, from the latter part of

the third millennium BCE down to the last years of the Achaemenid Empire. It was a

symbol known and used for almost two thousand years before Alexander's conquest of

western Asia. The symbol represented a number of distinct deities in such diverse

locations as Egypt, Syria, Anatolia, Assyria and Urartu, and ultimately, Persia. Since a

direct line of transmission cannot be traced to show from which exact cultural context the

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[68] Roaf (1983: 137) notes that the horns are like those in the headdresses of both Assyrian and Babylonian gods. The circular device can be compared to that found in the relief of Sar-i Pul-i Sohab, cf. Porada, 1965: 40; fig. 15.

[69] As pointed out by Shahbazi (1974:136): "The frequent occurrence of the winged-figure in Achaemenid art shows the importance which it held in the religious and social beliefs of the Persians." He also posited that its presence assured the protection of the king (1980: 121).

[70] Minor arts will be treated in chapters 4 and 5.

[71] See Conclusion, pp. 193-201. Cf. also Potts (2005: 23) on Darius' *coup d'etat* against the Teispid monarchy and the installation of the Achaemenid line of Darius.

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Persians adopted the symbol—it may have been drawn from any of a number of sources—this factor alone complicates the problem of identifying the symbol's intended meaning, especially during the period of Achaemenid rule.

It has been pointed out by a number of scholars that the symbol of the winged disk originated in Egypt.[72] Its first known greater "Mesopotamian" attestation is in the Levant on Syrian cylinder seals dating to the middle of the 18th century BCE (on the seal of Matrunna, the daughter of Aplahanda, king of Carchemish).[73] It also occurs on local Middle Bronze IIb Caananite scarabs.[74] Ornan suggests, therefore, that the first use of the winged disc in the Levant was actually inspired by Egyptian models (2005: 208). During the second half of the second millennium BCE, the winged disk is seen in northern Mesopotamia on seals of a Mitanni ruler from Nuzi.[75] The symbol also appears at this time in connection with the often compelling iconography of the Hittites (i.e., at the spring-side 13th century stone sanctuary of Eflatun Pinar, depicting deities beneath several winged disks, cf. Alexander, 1968; Joukowsky, 1996: 280; 287, fig. 7.48.) as well as on a seal of Suppiluliuma I.[76]

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[72] Van Buren, 1954: 94; Shahbazi, 1974: 135; Roaf, 1983: 133; Le Coq, 1984: 310; Dalley, 1986: 98.
[73] Dalley, 1986: 98; Ornan, 2005: 208
[74] Ornan, 2005: 208. See also Otto, 2000: 35, 270; and Ben-Tor, 1998: 7.
[75] Ornan, 2005: 208. The immediate inspiration for the form of the Achaemenid symbol would appear to have come, as has been noted above, from Assyria. However, the symbol's architectural placement over doorways was more likely inspired by Egyptian use. Cf. examples in the Temple of Hibis in Davies, 1953: pl. 12, 26.
[76] Dalley, 1986: 98.

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In Assyria, during the Middle Assyrian period, the symbol is seen on seals dating to the 14th and early 13th centuries BCE (Frankfort, 1939: 208; Van Buren, 1945: 94-95; Porada, 1975:169; Seidl,1989: 99). In the later Neo-Assyrian period, it is first seen on the "broken obelisk" dating to c. 1073-1056 BCE (Moortgat, 1969: 122, pl. 250; Ornan, 2005: 210). It eventually makes its initial appearance in greater Persia in the Bisotun relief. Root has indicated that the Persian variation of the winged disk is clearly descended from the Neo-Assyrian type of winged disk (1979: 172; see also Jacobs, 1991: 64); and, although the symbol was also well-attested in Urartu,[77] Root's surmise is quite possibly correct in terms of a stylistic prototype.

The symbol underwent a number of stylistic changes throughout its use in these various geographic and temporal contexts (see in particular Ornan, 2005); and the identity of the deity that was represented necessarily changed as well. For example, the Egyptian and Assyrian versions of the winged disk depicted very different deities: Horus or Re in Egypt (Frankfort, 1963: 117); and Ashur or Shamash in Assyria (Roaf, 1983: 133). Dalley also notes that the winged disk in Mesopotamia was known by three different names in the late second and early first millennia BCE (1986: 101).

Although the winged disk in Egypt often represented the solar deity, Re, and in the writing of Hittite royal names it meant "my sun," such a solar association did not necessarily apply in greater western Asia (Wilkinson, 1994: 213; Ornan, 2005: 209). In

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[77] See Collon, 1987: 86; 87, fig. 400, for an example of Urartian glyptic use of the winged disk.

other words, although Shamash was regarded as the sun god in Mesopotamia, regions both east and west of the core Mesopotamian heartland may not have supported this imterpretation. Ornan posits that the symbol was charged, for instance, with a multi-faceted meaning, in its initial use in Syrian glyptic (2005: 208; see also Teissier, 1996: 95-101). In fact, the modifications of the symbol's context in Syrian glyptic, where it was often associated with rosettes or stylized trees, support the proposition that the symbol was associated with various entities of a celestial nature, and not only with the sun (Ornan, 2005: 209). Further, Ornan notes that, although the winged disk served as a royal emblem on Syrian seals, and although it could reference the king and kingship in Egypt, Near Eastern imagery shows that it could carry a variety of meanings (2005: 209).

It is also of some importance that the symbol could be identified in Neo-Assyrian art with either Shamash (Seidl, 1971: 484-485; Reade, 1977: 38-39; Calmeyer, 1984: 140, 144-46; Collon 2001: 79), or Assur (Black and Green, 1992: 17, 186; Ornan, 2005: 212). The apparent flexibility in the meaning of the Neo-Assyrian symbol demonstrates, in fact, the potential that existed to invest it with an entirely new meaning (Ornan, 2005: 212). Indeed, this appears to mirror exactly what occurred in the time of Darius when the winged disk, already widely acknowledged as a pre-eminent religious symbol, was 'reinvented' with a new meaning, specifically within the politically charged context of the early years of the reign of Darius.

It is implied by the aforementioned that Darius' legitimacy may have been underwritten by his acceptance by the primary god of the ruling class in the highlands of southwestern

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Iran. In Persia this was, in all probability, Ahuramazda. In the milieu of the Achaemenid aristocracy, the officially espoused religion (though certainly not the only one) was one based on Mazdaism. The underlying message of a great god legitimizing his chosen earthly representative—as expressed in the royal art and rhetoric of Darius[78]—is nothing revolutionary; it is a concept as old as kingship itself.[79] The practice can be viewed as an *expected* observance of royal tradition in the ancient Near East. In short, Darius used an age-old formula to cement his power and to insure his following. His religious observance was also one that did not follow a static formula in so far as he could call on different gods in different circumstances.[80] Nevertheless, the one symbol, which appears to be the anchor of Darius' visual imagery, even in areas of the empire that are far distant from the heartland,[81] is that of the winged disk, or Ahuramazda. Perhaps it is exactly in this detail—the use of an icon to represent not only a supreme deity but also the close involvement of the elite circle of the Achaemenids—that Darius departs from his Anshanite predecessors.[82] Much as a flag represents a nation's identity, the symbol of the

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[78] The curious distinction made between the visual and written messages to disseminate different impressions of Darius' approach to his own mandated religion is an important point.

[79] Note the association of the En figure with the goddess Inanna in the top register of the Warka Vase (cf. also Roaf, 1999: 61).

[80] Egyptian deities invoked in the hieroglyphic inscriptions—and in the visual program—in the statue of Darius.

[81] Note the presence of the winged icon on Darius' various stelae from Egypt (pp. 82-85 below), as well as parallel evidence from different satrapies (Chapter 5).

[82] It is especially striking that the personal beliefs of Cyrus and his son Cambyses appear to have been more hidden than advertised.

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winged disk, it can be argued, was used as a dynastic marker that identified Darius and the Achaemenid Persian elite.[83]

3.3. The Identity of the Winged Disk in Achaemenid Art

Why the winged disk was used within the Achaemenid visual program to represent the empire's primary deity (as opposed to another pre-established symbol) is unclear, but one can imagine many good reasons for Darius' adoption of one of the better-known symbols of the ancient Near East to represent his chosen deity, Ahuramazda. Above all, such a choice could have arisen from a desire to link the new dynasty with the great empires of the past, where the winged disk had already played an important role.

Darius himself was a henotheist, if not a monotheist.[84] That is to say that he held Ahuramazda in the highest esteem, even if other gods were invoked on occasion in his inscriptions,[85] even if numerous Elamite and other deities appear in different texts in the Persepolis Fortification archives.[86] In other words, Darius walked a fine line. He used Ahuramazda to identify the deity of his choice (and presumably that of his main power

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[83] Lecoq suggests that the winged disk was an emblem which referred to both the deity and the power of the sovereign (1984: 326).

[84] Schwartz, 1985: 685.

[85] Ra or Atum in Egypt (cf. Vallatt, 1974: 166; Yoyotte, 1974: 182). Note also the example of the DPd3.24 inscription, where the phrase "all the gods of the royal house" is included in the inscription (Kent, 1953: 136).

[86] See Frye (1984: 177) who notes the co-existence of Iranian and Elamite deities, nature worship of spirits of mountains and rivers, all attested in the Achaemenid Elamite documents from Persepolis. See also Henkelman (2003: 407-456) who reviews these deities in detail.

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base, the Persian nobles)[87] but at the same time he allowed the varied elements of the population of Fars to continue to worship the individual deities of their choice.

As far as Darius' visual program was concerned, his choice of the winged disk as a symbol of his rule was characteristically perspicacious. In such a palatable, universally familiar and well-established device (Stronach, 2000: 184), he could at once find a vivid emblem for his core constituency—and a widely understood index of divine sanction for the balance of the numerous peoples over whom he ruled.

This said, the very varied forms of the Achaemenid winged disk have sometimes led to a search for multi-valent meanings. Detailed elements of the symbol (such as the nature of the crown or various wing types) can vary dramatically. Although the notion that these differences could be significant is not unattractive, the variations in question, such as the absence of a human bust or a change of crown or wing type may have been, as Roaf (1983: 138) has suggested, a product of stylistic convention based at least in part on a lack of space in which to execute the complete figure. It is also necessary to ask if certain of the differences were owed to chronological factors.[88] Certainly, the winged deity in any form acted as a readily identifiable symbol of Darius'—and his successor's—power and kingship. Both the abbreviated winged disk symbol and that

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[87] DBIV, 62: in the Elamite version, Ahuramazda is hailed as the "god of the Aryans" (Vallat, 1970).
[88] Contra Calmeyer, 1974. See also Root, 1979: 68; and Porada, 1961: 68.

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with an emerging human bust most likely expressed the same meaning.[89] The further one moves from the immediate royal sphere or, indeed, from the homeland itself, a degree of artistic license may also have been allowed, even in a specific and organized visual program such as that created by Darius. After all, the point of the use of a symbol is as a *quick reference* to a previously stated meaning. As a semiotic device it can evoke associations, at once cultural, religious and political. The notion that the viewer was expected to decipher minute variations of a visual code is self-defeating; it is most likely that the nuances of the visual code were secondary to the main message.

At the same time it has to be conceded that recent literature on this subject has raised a number of new interpretations. Writing some thirty years ago, Shahbazi chose to note that there were three possible interpretations of the symbol in its Achaemenid context (1974:136): a) The *fravahr* of the king above whom it hovers; b) Ahuramazda; c) The *khwrenah*, or glory and fortune of the Iranian king or nation. In the first case, it has been convincingly argued that identification with the *fravahr* (described as a man-like bird coming to the aid of warriors, or otherwise as the soul) is erroneous, as first and foremost, *fravashi* is a feminine noun (see Gershevitch,1959: 162-3; Shahbazi, 1974: 137; and Root's discussion, 1979: 169). The fact that the figure in the winged disk is always shown as a male in the context of Persian art does indeed make this interpretation unsatisfactory.

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[89] Lecoq is among those who believe the two types of winged disks had the same meaning (1984: 305).

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Shahbazi, who has long opposed the identification of the winged disk with Ahuramazda,[90] had instead suggested an identification with the *khwrenah*, i.e., with the fortune or glory of the Iranian king or nation (1980: 119; see also Frye, 1984: 177 and Calmeyer, 1974: 233-36). He also surmised that the two variations of the symbol (one with an emerging human figure and one without) represented two different meanings—the former, the fortune of the king; the latter (the plain solar disk), the fortune of ordinary Persians (1980: 121).[91] However, this explanation was contested almost from the beginning.[92] We will see in the following chapters, moreover, that the associations of the Achaemenid winged disk are not exclusively with Persians or, in an even wider sense, with Iranians.[93] Furthermore, it is imprecise to conflate modern-day customs and beliefs (such as modern-day Zoroastrian practices) with circumstances that obtained over two thousand years ago.[94]

At present, there is no incontrovertible proof for the identification of the symbol of the winged disk as Ahuramazda. But one can state that there is much circumstantial evidence

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[90] In part, because modern-day Zoroastrians make no image of their god. This was based on the assumption that Darius was Zoroastrian.

[91] See also Stronach's discussion on the crown variations and their meanings, contra Shabazi. Stronach supports the view that the symbol represents Ahuramazda (2000: 180; cf. also Roaf, 1983: 133).

[92] Cf. Lecoq, 1984: 325.

[93] Such as its appearance on gold brachteates in a Sardian tomb (cf. Dusinberre, 2003: 149, fig. 55).

[94] As per Root (1979: 169), making the assumption that Darius practiced orthodox Zoroastrianism and thus made no image of his god suggests that the religion did not evolve for 2,500 years. However, it should be taken into account that monumental sculpture in the Sassanian period not only provided images of Ahuramazda, it also represented the god on horseback (cf. Schmidt, 1970: pl. 97). See also comments of de Jong (2005: pp. 85-99).

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that supports such an interpretation. Thus, the winged disk regularly appears hovering directly above the image of the Persian king, and in monumental art the symbol is often associated with textual invocations of Ahuramazda.[95] The great relief of Darius at Bisotun offers the prime example, even if the winged disk itself is not identified by a trilingual cuneiform label. In the context of royal self-representation the association between Ahuramazda and the winged disk with a human bust appears to be particularly plausible.[96] In Root's words, "Ahuramazda is the omnipresent spirit whose very existence is the seal of approval on all the king's actions" (1979: 170). And while, in other non-royal contemporaneous contexts, there may be alternate meanings for the symbol,[97] it is clear that Darius and his successors made a concerted effort to promote Ahuramazda in close association with the crown of Persia.[98]

As has been demonstrated, the winged symbol carried a quasi-universal meaning during Achaemenid rule in that it represented not only the god of the Persian king, but hearkened back to prior associations with a number of high-ranking deities from the regions of greater Mesopotamia and Egypt. Through the use of a single symbol, the Persian king was able to introduce the concept of a powerful Iranian god to a wide audience without thrusting aside the religious sensibilities of many of his subjects. Perhaps the example of Nabonidus was not lost on the Persians—after all, it was partly his insensitive neglect of

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[95] Cf. Root, 1979: 170.

[96] Root, 1979: 169; see also supporting arguments offered by Layard, 1850: 440; Duchesne-Guillemin, 1966: 91; Lecoq, 1984: 325; Briant, 1996: 260.

[97] As previously expressed in this chapter.

[98] Lecoq is emphatic in his statement that the only plausible identification of the winged disk in this context is Ahuramazda (1984: 325). After reviewing the evidence, I have to agree with this finding.

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Marduk in favor of the god Sin that aided Cyrus in his quest to capture Babylon.[99] In a much more astute move, Darius presented his own god, at least in visual terms, as one that was already familiar to the long-established cultures of his newly acquired empire.

3.4. Evidence for the Winged Disk in Monumental Achaemenid Art

Although the arresting art and architecture of Cyrus the Great clearly provided a major conceptual foundation on which Darius was able to build, there is no evidence to suggest that Cyrus himself introduced the symbol of the winged disk.[100] In fortuitous contrast, a wide range of material evidence from the reigns of Darius and his successors may be said to survive in the form of inscriptions, foundation deposits, monumental architecture, papyri and glyptic—each of which help to document the actions and motivations of Darius and the kings that followed him. More pertinent to our discourse, these royal messages were not only transmitted through royal inscriptions as such, but also through the architecture and the related visual program of the Persian rulers. The most obvious and significant message was that of the power and legitimacy of the king, expressed variously through a number of previously well-established images, which included scenes of heroic combat with real or mythical creatures or of the ruler enthroned. In addition to borrowing—and adopting—these traditional elements of Mesopotamian royal iconography, Darius radically reworked the "royal review" motif (cf. Stronach, 2002) and introduced wholly new motifs such as the intriguing array of "assembled nobles" and the

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[99] See especially, Kuhrt, 1995: 597-601; also Oates, 1986: 131-136.

[100] Cyrus' built monuments do markedly little, as it happens, to reveal the nature of the ruler's personal beliefs. And since the famed "Cyrus Cylinder" from Babylon (for which see Pritchard, 1969: 316) was chiefly composed for the benefit of a Babylonian audience, it cannot be taken as a true guide to Cyrus' personal religious convictions.

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seemingly infinite rows of Persian guards. All of these images were of course designed to reinforce the concept of the invincible and rightful ruler, that of a well-ordered empire, and above all, that of a peaceful, harmonious realm that depended, in absolute terms, on the sanctified rule of the king.[101]

Darius first introduced the new symbol for his chosen deity, Ahuramazda, in a literally monumental manner—on the massive cliff-face at Bisotun. Furthermore, this powerful visual statement was copied in stone and sent, at the very least, to Babylon and Elephantine in Egypt for, presumable, public display.[102] Beyond this, the Persian ruler placed the symbol of the winged disk in numerous other locations, most of them on a relatively grand scale. While most of the known examples derive from within the homeland of Parsa (most specifically, from Persepolis and its immediate vicinity), there are also rare occurrences outside the heartland. The latter demonstrate to some degree the power and effectiveness of the symbol even far from the Persian homeland. These examples can be found in the ancient Elamite capital city of Susa in Khuzistan; in Egypt, on stela deriving from the Suez Canal region; and as mentioned above, on the vertical face of the mountain of Bisotun, in the region of ancient Media on the great east-west trunk road.[103] While it is true that the winged disk is more prominent in the Persian

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[101] Evidence of constant tension within the empire is proffered by Kuhrt, 1995: 665; Briant, 1996: 127-135.

[102] Substantial evidence, first pointed out by Ursula Seidl (1999:101-114), exists to comfortably ascertain that copies of the Bisotun monument were made and distributed throughout the empire to be read and viewed by subjects of Darius.

[103] It is appropriate here to mention a second "roadside inscription": that from Mount Alvand, 12 km southwest from Hamadan, which invokes Ahuramazda and names Darius "king of the lands" (Brosius, 2000: 42; for the high pass that climbs over part of the

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heartland (and, as we shall see in the following chapters, this is true whether in the context of monumental or minor art), the few examples from the periphery are nevertheless strategically located, and appear quite specific in their placement and purpose.

Additionally, many of the monumental examples of the winged disk occur in conjunction with a royal inscription, placed in close proximity to the symbol. Within the text of these inscriptions Darius often outlines the basic precepts of his political ideals: Ahuramazda is the creator of all that is good, and Darius is Ahuramazda's chosen restorer of the empire.[104] By virtue of their huge importance, Darius' inscriptions need to be at least acknowledged in the context of his visual program. The two elements function as intertwined expressions of Darius' political message; separating the inscriptions from their visual equivalents simply ignores their intended complementary role. However, it is nevertheless necessary to recall that only a small portion of the populace was in any sense literate.[105] Accordingly, we must suppose that the audience was intended to "read" the iconography while also conceivably recalling memorable phrases from the adjacent text. In short, text and image together projected a powerful statement.[106] The primary examples

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Alvand massif, see also Stronach, 2003: 245). Unfortunately, no image complements the twin texts ascribed to Darius and Xerxes.
[104] Cf. DSf, lines 2.1-10, Kent, 1953: 143-144.
[105] Wiesehofer, 1996: 7.
[106] As per Root, the relief of Naqsh-i Rustam "parallels in visual terms the constant refrain of Achaemenid inscriptions" (1979: 173).

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of text that will be reviewed below are those that occur, therefore, in conjunction with the image of the winged disk.[107]

3.5. The Monuments

While this is not meant to be a 'catalogue raisonné' of all Persian monuments and palaces, a good number of the following entries provide examples of the winged disk in a monumental form. Several in particular appear to be eloquent manifestations of Darius' original intentions. This section reviews the most prominent examples. In particular, the Bisotun monument of Darius, which was the most important in terms of the introduction of, and the promotion of, Ahuramazda.

3.5.1. Darius' Relief at Bisotun

The extraordinary relief at Bisotun (Fig. 3.1), also variously known as Behistun or Bisitun,[108] was carved by Darius sometime before 519 BCE in the first few years of his reign.[109] This monumental relief, measuring approximately 10 ft. high x 18 ft wide, is dramatically placed about 500 ft. above the base of the vertical cliff face of a salient mountain (King, 1907: Xxii; Brosius, 2000: 30). Carved after the quelling of the many revolts that took place in different parts of the empire during the first few years of Darius'

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[107] For a full list of Near Eastern texts related to the Achaemenid empire, see Brosius, 2000: xii-xiii.

[108] Note that the name comes from the term "Bãga-stane" or "place of the God"(Brosius, 2000: 27).

[109] The dating is imprecise, but general consensus appears to be that the relief, with its adjoining inscriptions, was Darius' first monumental political message (Root, 1979: 45). See also Stronach and Zournatzi, 1997b: 330-331.

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reign, the relief can be described as a testament to Darius' remarkable success in establishing his right to rule.[110]

The privileged location chosen for the execution of the relief—about 65 miles from Hamadan, overlooking the Kermansha plain and situated on a major east-west highway (King, 1907: I)—was well chosen for Darius' first public monumental statement. The mountain stands near a deep stream-fed pool, which was used to water caravans traveling the important road which connected Babylon to Hamadan (Briant, 1988: 136). As a result, the relief was assuredly seen by many passers-by—from traders to court personnel.[111] The mountain was already sacred in earlier times, as is attested, in part, by its ancient name meaning 'place of the gods'.[112] Additionally, the site may lie in the locality where Darius crushed Gaumata's revolt (Briant, 1996: 131).

The Bisotun relief depicts the focal figure of the heroic ruler Darius receiving a circular device[113] from the elevated, hovering symbol of Ahuramazda to whom he raises his hand in formal salute. In Darius' left hand, a bow rests on his extended left foot which stands firmly on the body of his foe, Gaumata. Darius is the largest figure in the scene. The

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[110] Brosius, 2000: 30. See also Stronach, 1984: 483, who notes that Darius, by his own admission, was clearly not next in line to the throne.
[111] Briant (1995: 369-398) analyzes the various uses and users of the "royal road"—the network of roads where the relief was placed. Armies, messengers, satraps, courtiers and merchants could have had passage on the route.
[112] Luschey, 1968: 67.
[113] While it is tempting to associate this device with "the ring of kingship" seen in Mesopotamian examples of royal art, the so-called "measuring rod" is missing in this iconographic combination, and therefore the meaning of the symbol is unclear. It may reference Assyrian iconographic examples of the winged god Ashur or Shamash extending a ring to the Assyrian monarch (cf. Amiet, 1981: pl. 121).

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symbol of Ahuramazda is depicted as a circular device from which straight wings and an eagle-like tail and tendrils project. The figure of the deity, looking much like a regal Persian himself, emanates from the top of the circle and faces the new king. The deity is placed at the center and apex of the tableau. On the left of Darius, essentially behind the king, stand two Persian nobles—one, his spearbearer; the other carries a bow at the ready. These depict his Persian supporters, nobles who are listed in lines 80-86 of column IV of the inscription. While Darius' leading foot rests on the prostrate body of his principal opponent, Gaumata, who raises his arms in supplication, the nine "liar kings" stand shackled and bowed before the larger-than-life image of the victorious king.[114] The relief does not depict, but rather suggests the chaos that Darius encountered,[115] and the battles he fought and won in order to restore *Arta*—or order—at the beginning of his reign.[116] The tableau is somewhat tense and formal and does nothing to hint at the expression of a 'voluntarily' united empire as in the later Persepolitan reliefs.

The scene is flanked on three sides by columns of inscriptions written in three different cuneiform scripts: Old Persian,[117] Elamite, and also late Babylonian cuneiform. [118] The

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[114] The pictured captives are identified as: Gaumata, Atrina, a Susian; Nidintu-Bel, a Babylonian; Fravartish, a Median; Martiya, a Susian; Citrantakhma, a Sagartian; Vahyazdata, a Persian; Arakha, a Babylonian; and Frada, a Margian (King, 1907: Xliii). See also more recent readings of the names in Brosius, 2000: 37. The final captive figure on the right—Skhunkha the Scythian—was not in the original design of the relief and was added several years after the original design following Scythia's conquest.
[115] Waters, 2005: 97.
[116] And, as Marian Feldman also notes, the relief in fact *depicts* the order Darius established out of the chaos (personal communication, April 2009).
[117] The written form was created early in the reign of Darius (cf. Waters, 2005: 91). This thesis has been successfully argued by several scholars, specifically Stronach, 1990: 326ff; also Schmitt, 1990. For a contrary view, see Root, 1979: 46-58.

inscriptions primarily record Darius' victories over his opponents, with some variations in presentation.[119] The columns of text are placed as follows: to the right of the relief, the original Elamite text; and opposite, on the left side of the relief, the Babylonian text (Stronach and Zournatzi, 1997b: 330). Placed below the relief scene are five columns of cuneiform text in OP; to the left of the OP are 3 columns of additional cuneiform Elamite text (representing the second Elamite version). Both the Elamite and Babylonian inscriptions contain the translation of the first 4 columns of the Persian text (King, 1907: XII; Kent, 1953: 116-135).While trilingual labels identify each of Darius' vanquished opponents, neither he, his high ranking attendants, nor the winged symbol of Ahuramazda are similarly identified. The role of these protagonists was presumably regarded as self-evident.

The inaccessibility of the relief has led some to surmise that it was not meant to be viewed by the subjects of the empire, but rather solely created for the benefit of Darius' god, Ahuramazda. Yet enough evidence exists to demonstrate that the relief was not created strictly for the edification of the great god Ahuramazda alone, or that this was even the primary reason for the relief's execution. As Darius himself states (DB. Column IV, 70.488-492), his inscription was also composed "on clay tablets and parchment" and was "sent everywhere among the provinces." That this claim was no idle boast has since

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[118] For the Old Persian version, see Kent, 1953:116-134; and now Schmitt, 1991; for the Babylonian, see Voigtlander, 1978; and for the Elamite, Vallat, 1970.
[119] For example, the Babylonian version lists the number of casualties inflicted on the opposing forces (Bisotun, column II, lines 25.7-8; cf. Voigtlander, 1978).

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been demonstrated by papyri discovered at distant Elephantine.[120] In addition, a small-scale stone copy of the relief is known from Babylon,[121] and another, in glazed brick, appears to have been erected at Susa (see Canby, 1979: 319; and Muscarella in Harper et al, 1992: 218). Both the subject of the relief and the written message that accompanied it were therefore familiar throughout Darius' dominion.[122] In this way, those viewing the actual relief on the mountain of Bisotun—even if only viewed from afar—could link the king's monumental message to their prior knowledge of its existence. Therefore, a close encounter with the original monument was not a prerequisite. A mere glimpse of the lofty relief would have been enough to call to mind the substance of Darius' compelling *res gestae*.

The monument's message was not, however, a simple statement affirming Darius' success and his right to rule. On the contrary, the monument performed the complex task of disseminating a multivalent message in which Darius sought to a) underscore his legitimacy as king; b) introduce the god Ahuramazda as a supreme deity with a readily identifiable Near Eastern image (the winged disk), and c) define the Achaemenid house through its Persian/Iranian background.

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[120] Greenfield and Porten, 1982: 91-102.

[121] Cf. Seidl, 1976; Porada, 1985: 811.

[122] Of course, it is almost certain that the text was read out loud, as the majority of the population was illiterate. Darius himself states in DBV.70.4.88-92, "It was inscribed and was read off before me." Later, the Roman Emperor Augustus used the same method to promote his legitimacy—he created his victory mausoleum and also sent copies of his *res gestae* throughout the empire (Zanker, 1988: 276; see also Wiesehofer, 1996: 13).

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Darius' message was expressed in both iconography and text. The iconographic aspects of the relief are evident and understandable almost without the need to refer to the associated inscriptions, and no doubt had the desired effect on their own. To a degree, as suggested by Briant, the relief illustrates the surrounding inscriptions (1988: 137). It visually expresses all that needs to be known of the pseudo-political religious message contained in the inscription: the king is great, he has put down the rebellion, he has punished the evil-doers and lie-followers, and the greatest of gods hands Darius the ring of kingship in an incontestable symbol of rightful and legitimate rule. And while the image so clearly evokes the written word, the inscriptions and imagery together form an exemplary expression of the royal persona Darius was attempting to present to his empire in the initial period of his rule.[123]

The inscriptions articulate Darius' blood-claim to the throne. He proudly proclaims his Achaemenid lineage, which hearkens back to a certain Achaemenes. But even this clan-based justification is in the end eclipsed by the legitimacy conferred on his rule by his association with Ahuramazda. This is seen especially in subsequent inscriptions, where Darius' purported ties to Cyrus II cease to be a formulaic necessity. This only enhances the notion that his blood-tie to Cyrus is more than likely to be fabricated (see arguments for—Brosius, 2000: 31; Potts, 2005: 7-28; and for another view, Waters, 2005: 97).

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[123] As noted by Feldman (2007: 267), the text and image worked together "to express Darius' legitimacy and favor."

As propagandic as the inscriptions may seem, a powerful religious message is woven throughout the visual and textual elements of the monument. The relief is as a whole capped by an image celebrating the god Ahuramazda. And, in a sense, Ahuramazda and Darius form the nucleus of the universe created by the relief. After Darius states his lineage in Bisotun (DBI.1-11; Kent, 1953: 119), the king expresses his integral relationship with his god, placing in Ahuramazda's hands the creation of the universe and his own elevation to the throne:

Saith Darius the King: By the will of Ahuramazda I am king; Ahuramazda bestowed the kingdom upon me.[124] [Column I, Lines 11-12]

It is particularly arresting to consider that this image, which was propagated throughout the empire to a substantial degree, unequivocally identifies Ahuramazda as the True source of Darius' legitimate rule.[125] To my mind this consideration disqualifies Root's assertion that the mutual "raised hand gesture" can be taken to be a sign of equality (1979: 174-176). Such a gesture obviously signals mutual acknowledgement, but ultimately, the deity still hovers above the scene in a numinous realm to which Darius does not belong.

The monument's distribution (in the form of copies that were sent to the uttermost reaches of the empire in a smaller format) expresses a desire to reify the relationship of

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[124] Kent, 1953: 119.

[125] To quote Stronach (1984: 484), "The obvious recourse for the new ruler was to invoke that most favored of justifications, a divine call."

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god and king to a widespread audience. In this early period of rule, the supremacy of

Ahuramazda was an important message to disseminate,[126] even–to an extent—outside

greater Persia. But while the rhetoric was clear regarding the deity, the symbol itself was

vivid enough to semiotically reach the greater non-Persian populace of the empire as a

recognizable, legitimate god. The monument's geographic location may also reflect

parallel political motives. That is to say that it was placed near Hamadan, the ancient

Median capital, and hence deep in traditional Median territory. Possible links between the

Medes and Mazdaism have already been noted (Schwartz, 1985: 696; Stronach, 1985:

836), and this attestation may have also have been meant to stress that the king's primary

deity was one common to both Medes and Persians.

Finally, the textual and visual components of the remarkable Bisotun monument stress

one other unmistakable and sometimes overlooked message. Namely, the fact that Darius

was intent on creating a Victory Monument. As such, Darius and Ahuramazda (and,

hence, the evocative symbol that Darius chose to represent him) are showcased in a

militant setting. In other words, Darius built upon the visual model of Anubanini's far

older rock-cut relief at Sar-I Pul-I Zohab, where the image of Ishtar, in her aspect as the

goddess of war, presides over Anubanini's celebration of his victory over a file of nine

shackled opponents (Cf. Porada, 1965: 40-41; Fig. 15). Not only does Darius' trilingual

inscription at Bisotun repeatedly indicate that, in every engagement, Ahuramazda bore

Darius "aid" (e.g. DBIV.63.4.62; Kent, 1953: 182), but as Frye has remarked (1984:

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[126] Stronach notes (1984: 484) that the phrase "by the will of Ahuramazda" is cited over
35 times in the 5 columns of the Bisotun text.

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177), the various texts at Bisotun show that Darius considered the "rebels" opposed to him to be "faithless and not worshippers of Ahuramazda." Therefore, in fact the protective role of the winged disk, not least in representations of combat, can be seen to have remained a consistent theme.

3.5.2. Monuments at Susa

3.5.2.a. The Palace of Darius

The construction of Darius' palace at Susa, the ancient lowland capital of the Elamites, was begun soon after his acquisition of the throne and it appears to have proceeded at a rapid pace, although its terminal date is unknown. Most of the palaces at Persepolis remained unfinished upon Darius' death and they exhibit the same basic iconographic program as that seen at Susa, only in a somewhat more developed form. In contrast, what remains of the palace at Susa and its brick décor appears to echo much in the Babylonian, Mesopotamian and Elamite tradition,[127] and the focus in the iconography appears to be a unification of their respective traditions. At Susa, the surviving references to the great king's religious alignment are sparse and diverse, and take shape in the form of only one known appearance of the winged disk in the extant glazed brick friezes (aside from references in several inscriptions, including the trilingual text of the Susa foundation inscription (DSf) and in the cuneiform inscriptions on the statue of Darius).

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[127] For a general analysis of the types of cultural references made by the Susian brick friezes, see Maras, 2006, *in press*.

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The only surviving visual reference to the winged disk at Susa appears in a molded, glazed brick frieze (Fig. 3.2). Unfortunately, its exact original location is unknown.[128] This frieze depicts two confronted, human-headed, crowned lion-sphinxes with raised paws, above which floats a winged disk without a human bust. This particular winged disk looks Egyptianizing, or perhaps abbreviated. One should note that this abbreviated winged disk type is also seen at Persepolis at a later date, where both types of winged disk are in use concurrently (that is, both the disk with an emerging human bust, and the simple abbreviated form). The one known type of winged disk at Susa should not be viewed, therefore, as an anomaly from the early period of Darius' reign.

Although the above-mentioned winged disk is to-date unique at Susa, this may simply be due to the accident of excavation. It is always possible, in other words, that the symbol may have been as prominently advertised at Susa as at Persepolis, especially since the known foundation inscriptions from the two sites would appear to invoke the deity's name to a similar extent (see below).

3.5.2.b. The Statue of Darius

The only known at least half-complete royal stone statue of Achaemenid date consists of the statue of Darius the Great that was found at Susa in December, 1972. Made in Egypt c. 490 BCE, it originally adorned the main temple at Heliopolis from whence it was brought to Susa (see Root: 1979: 45), very probably in the reign of Xerxes (Stronach,

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[128] See Muscarella, 1992: 217, for a discussion of the possible original locations of the various brick panels.

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1974; Root, 1979: 123, n. 247). It was discovered on the Apadana mound, east of the palace of Darius at Susa, where it was set against the west wall of the Gate of Darius.[129] The statue (Fig. 3.3) is broken away at the chest and therefore lacks the head and shoulders. It shows the great king in a typical Egyptian, half-striding pose wearing a long, pleated Persian robe. On the base of the statue are Egyptian cartouches, within which different peoples of the empire have been depicted wearing regionally identifiable garments, and an invocation of Atum of Heliopolis as patron deity of Darius (Yoyotte, 1974: 182).

The green schist statue[130] was placed at one side of the inner door of the ceremonial gate leading to Darius' Apadana and associated palatial apartments at Susa. Originally four such statues may have been used to flank the gate's two opposed doorways. The metaphoric use of Persian gates (such as at Pasargadae[131] and Persepolis), as well as palace doorways has been described—they represented a transitional space from the outside world into the royal sphere.[132] Often there were protective mythological creatures in the form of monumental sculpture or even the image of the king (in relief form) placed

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[129] Perrot and Ladiray, 1974: 44.

[130] Trichet and Poupet, 1974: 58.

[131] For Gate R at Pasargadae, see Stronach, 1978: 50-51. He posits that, in the ancient Near East, a gate functioned as more than a mere point of entry, and that Cyrus was certainly aware of the psychological and ceremonial advantages of a free-standing gate (*ibid*: 50).

[132] Root suggests the carved doorways of Persepolis acted as liminal spaces of transition (1979: 177).

into these doorways. Therefore one can deduce that Darius' statue (of which there may have been at least two[133]) was also meant as a protective device.

Although there is no iconic symbol of the god Ahuramazda to be found on the remains of the statue,[134] he is invoked in the trilingual (OP, Elamite, Babylonian) inscription running down the vertical pleats on the right side of his robe (Root, 1979: 69). The formula follows that of other inscriptions, but Darius states that he commissioned the statue to show that "The Persian man had conquered Egypt." At the same time, the Egyptian hieroglyphic inscription on the corresponding left pleat invokes Atum (Yoyotte, 1974: 182). On the base, 2 Nile gods are engraved and proclaim that they offer to Darius Upper and Lower Egypt, and offer adoration equal to that given to the god Re (Yoyotte, 1974: 182; Root, 1979: 70; Brosius, 2000: 45).

This rare example of Persian sculpture demonstrates Darius' religious fluidity in terms of cultural context. To the Persians and the ruling elite in the Persian homeland, Darius sustains Ahuramazda. In his message to the Egyptians (on a statue made in Egypt originally to be placed in an Egyptian context), he invokes Egyptian gods along with his

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[133] There is evidence for a second statue (Perrot and Ladiray, 1974: 44).
[134] Perhaps this is due to the parallel invocation of Atum on the sculpture's pleats. Stronach rightly points out that there is no suitably elevated position for the placement of a winged disk on the statue, besides the fact that the Egyptian deities honored are placed beneath the feet of Darius (personal communication, October 2008). In contrast, Feldman suggests that is is *possible* that a crown placed on the figure's head could have very well contained such a symbol, particularly if the crown was of the Egyptian variety (personal communication, October 2008). For the moment, this aspect remains unknown.

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own Persian deity. But even in this example, Ahuramazda still has the primacy of position.

3.5.3. Inscriptions at Susa

If Ahuramazda is not prominent in the visual record, the invocation of the god is not lacking in the inscriptions of Susa, placed, in addition to the Darius statue, on column bases, glazed brick friezes and clay and stone foundation tablets. In Darius' Susa Foundation charter DSf (3.a.8-12, Kent, 1953: 142-144), which purports to describe the construction of the palace, Ahuramazda is named as the 'greatest of gods' and creator of all. The text was found on both clay and marble tablets (see Stolper, 1992: 260; 272; also Brosius, 2000: 41). It was also placed in a glazed brick frieze located in the Great Hall at Susa, and an Elamite and Babylonian version were also located in the Apadana.[135] As Brosius stresses, the inscriptions "affirm that the king acts through [Ahuramazda's] divine support"(2000: 41). Additionally, the DSe inscription extols Darius' acts as ruler, and, importantly, his genealogy (Kent, 1953: 141-142).[136] The inscription names Ahuramazda as creator and protector, although in keeping with Darius' seemingly henotheistic beliefs, it also adds "May Ahuramazda, together with the (other) gods protect me" (DSe 6.49-52)(Kent, 1953: 142).

As might be expected, the inscriptions at Susa affirm the pre-eminence of the supreme Persian deity, Ahuramazda, even when the existence of other gods is conceded. At the

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[135] Stolper, 1992: 272. Cf. Vallat, 1970: 149-160.
[136] Brosius describes this as his clan (Achaemenid), his tribe (Persian), then his ethnicity (Aryan)(2000: 42).

same time, however, Darius' references to various Egyptian deities in the Egyptian texts associated with the Statue of Darius underscore, more than anything else, the importance of context in this case.

3.5.4. Monuments of Persepolis

In terms of monumental architecture, the winged disk makes its most frequent appearance on the carved stone reliefs at Persepolis, Darius' spectacular capital in the heartland of Persia, located 80 kilometers by land and 43 kilometers as the crow flies to the southwest of Pasargadae (Schmidt, 1953: 20). The terrace on which the palaces stand rises dramatically to at least 12 meters above the surrounding plain (Schmidt, 1953: 61-62; Wiesehofer, 2005: 21). Here, we see the fully developed Achaemenid iconographic program, and the placement of the winged disk in strategic positions across much of the site.

Those structures which can be ascribed to Darius, in terms of either planning or execution, are numerous enough to get a very strong sense of his influence in setting the tone for all subsequent royal construction. Among the features that were in all probability at least planned by Darius were the north and east "staircase reliefs" of the Apadana;[137] the Palace of Darius, and the Central building. The tomb of Darius at Naqsh-i Rustam, and part of the extended complex of Persepolis, were each planned and executed early in Darius' reign (Stronach, 1978: 304). And while the winged disk appears first and

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[137] The north stair begun before 486 BCE, and the east stair planned before 486 BCE (Root, 1979: 44; cf. Roaf, 1981: 150-157 for complete dating and plans of the site).

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foremost on the structures attributed to Darius, it also occurs on numerous other buildings constructed by his successors.

3.5.4.a.The Apadana Staircases

The almost mirror-image reliefs of the Apadana staircases originally included Achaemenid Iran's most extensive display of carved, monumental images. The carved slabs in question depict, inter alia, three registers of tribute bearers originating from all areas of the vast empire, enigmatic scenes of lions attacking bulls, vegetal matter of an apotropaic nature, Persian royal guards, and most importantly, the king enthroned with the winged disk hovering protectively above the seated figure of the monarch (Fig. 3.4a). Although not fully realized during Darius' reign, the relief program of the Apadana (and that of many other major structures) was planned under Darius and completed by his son, Xerxes (cf. Root, 1979: 44, 95). While the present central scene (Fig. 3.4b) on both the north and the east sides of the socle of the Apadana consists of short, confronted files of Persian guards[138] (Schmidt, 1953: 3), it was eventually shown by Tilia (1972: 175-198) that these strangely meaningless scenes replaced those of the enthroned ruler (which were then stored in the treasury).[139] With this discovery in mind, it is evident that in its original conception, the almost mirror-images on the north and east sides of the Apadana were intended to portray an impressive review of delegations from twenty-three of the subject peoples of the empire with, in each case, the enthroned monarch and the superimposed

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[138] This panel was also capped with a winged disk at the apex. See Schmidt, 1953: plate 22.

[139] The original review scene dates from between the second half of the reign of Darius to the first half of the reign of Xerxes.

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symbol of Ahuramazda marking the indicated forms of authority. A few steps above such majestic (and central) scenes, each privileged visitor arrived, in fact, at the floor level of the Apadana itself.

3.5.4.b. Other Structures at Persepolis

Other structures that can be attributed to Darius include the private Palace of Darius or "Tachara", and the "Central Building" or "Trypilon" (contemporary with Darius, i.e., before 486 BCE)(Schmidt, 1953: 153). Both Darius and his successors made liberal use of the winged disk in the Achaemenid relief program, focusing on placing the deity as a protective force over the image of the ruler carved into the stone doorjambs. It is of interest to examine the placement of the figure in the liminal space of transition identified by Root (1979:177). Doorways of main use or focus such as entryways, or doorways of central rooms (i.e., the most public or ceremonial spaces), are consistently decorated with reliefs, the subjects of which are often Ahuramazda and the king.

The "Tachara," a slightly rectangular, 12-columned hall believed to be a small, private palace of Darius, was built just south of the Apadana on the southwest part of the Terrace (Schmidt, 1953: 222). It had a staircase decorated with stone orthostats (much as the case of the Apadana staircases), with the general theme of processions or banquet offerings. In this structure, the winged disk was placed strategically in doorways above images of the king. Porticos displayed Persian guards, and inside the stone doorjambs of major doorways the ruler was shown striding under an inscription and the winged disk (Fig. 3.5,

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east jamb; Schmidt, 1957: pl. 140, fig. b), or in a scene of heroic combat fighting mythological beasts (Fig. 3.6, south jamb; Schmidt, 1957: pl. 145 fig. b).

The main entry's reliefs were secular in nature—the observer was faced first with images of the King or his guards. The central room—consistent with the Achaemenid use of iconography—was surrounded with imagery of the royal hero or great king placed within or near doorways. The rooms directly off the central court were also "protected" with images of the royal hero (the two images, that of the king and royal hero, are seen consistently together, as if to emphasize the fact that the royal hero represents the *alter ego* of the king).

From these semi-public spaces one entered the rear rooms. These areas were decorated only with reliefs of personal attendants carrying towels and ointment jars. No evident apotropaic imagery was used in these informal spaces, at least not in the form of sculpture or visible remains (although we cannot discount the possibility of painted imagery). It is only the most public or visible parts of the structure that were adorned with the image of Ahuramazda.

The Trypilon, perhaps a more intimate meeting hall and considered a council hall by the excavator Schmidt (1957: 107), was placed between the Apadana and Throne Hall of Xerxes. A stairway lined with reliefs of guards, lions attacking bulls, winged sphinxs and Persian delegates led to a main hall and private rooms, which no doubt contributed to Schmidt's interpretation of the structure. Three of the major doorways of the main hall

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(south, north and east) had relief decoration on the stone doorjambs, but no inscriptions were located (Root, 1979: 97).

In the Trypilon reliefs, which were of a generally secular nature, the main entry to the central building was adorned with reliefs of dignitaries. The central space had images of the king in all the doorways, as did a secondary throne or gathering room, where the king's image protected the main doorway. At the very rear, images of servants carried banquet supplies. In general, the king was depicted as seated in audience (E. doorway; Fig. 3.7a; Schmidt, 1957: pl. 99; cf. also Root, 1979: 97; and Fig. 3.7b, *ibid*: pl. 97), or walking with a staff in his hand followed by attendants (Fig. 3.8)(*ibid*: pl. 75). In all contexts, he was overseen by Ahuramazda (Fig. 3.7c, Schmidt, 1957: pl. 79) (once with what Root refers to as "the ring of kingship" on the N. and S. jambs of the Trypilon, placed there in the time of Artaxerxes I). As in the Tachara, the ruler and his god were placed in the more public or easily accessible areas of the structure.

It is suggested by Root (1979: 97) that the reliefs of these buildings are preoccupied with kingship, and are thus not particularly religious. She posits, however, that they convey protection of the ruler, and the oft-stated idea that Ahuramazda has made everything possible (*ibid*). Indeed, this repetitive placement in areas of passage reaffirm the Persian king's right to rule and his identity as a Mazda worshipper. *Contra* Root, Stronach (personal communication) notes that Ahuramazda "presides over all". Seen in this context, the reliefs take on a more religious tone.

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The use of the winged disk in the royal iconography of the structures does not diminish under the reigns of Darius' successors, Xerxes and Artaxerxes I and III. Once again, the deity is placed above the image of the ruler enthroned or striding under a royal parasol, placed in the transitive spaces of the palace doorways. Abundant, well-preserved examples are still extant at the site, found carved on stone orthostats in the "Harem" of Xerxes (Schmidt, 1953: 255-264); the Palace of Xerxes (*ibid*: 238-244); the Throne Hall or Hall of 100 Columns begun by Xerxes and finished by his son Artaxerxes (*ibid*: 129-137; Root, 1979: 108); and Palace H, also constructed by the two rulers (Schmidt, 1953: 280-282). In the many doorways of these lofty stone and wood structures, the image of the ruler, existing in an eternally frozen state under the watchful and protective gaze of his god, permeated the royal city. One could not help feel, surely, the presence of both the Persian king and Ahuramazda wherever the royal corridors and passages led. It was manifestly clear to Darius' successors that the continued association between ruler and deity was a necessary part of sustaining royal identity and power.

3.5.5. Inscriptions at Persepolis

The architectural inscriptions at Persepolis are relegated for the most part to column bases, inner doorways and stone panels on the stairways. They reiterate much of the preceding formulas seen at Bisotun and Susa, albeit in much shorter, abbreviated form. For example, in the DPe inscription, placed on the south retaining wall of the Palace of Darius, Darius includes a list of the countries under his rule. In other inscriptions variously placed in the structures, he again notes his family lineage as being Achaemenian'; or in one, recognizes other gods in a phrase that appears almost in

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passing: Darius proclaims "this I pray as a boon from Ahuramazda, together with the gods of the royal house" (DPd, Kent, 1953: 109). But in DPh (a trilingual on 2 gold and 2 silver plates), he states "thence unto Sardis—which Ahuramazda the greatest of gods bestowed upon me" (*ibid*: 109).[140]

The placement of the winged disk in conjunction with images of the ruler and inscribed invocations reiterates the association between the two, made first in the Bisotun relief. And while this combination of ruler and winged disk occurs in the somewhat restricted confines of the palace areas, these areas would nevertheless have been trafficked by administrators, dignitaries, the royal family and those in service of the palace. Even if there is some dispute over the actual uses that were made of the site,[141] the intent behind the iconographic program on the structures is clear. The repetitive messages were of regal power, and the close association between king and deity.

3.5.6. Naqsh-i Rustam: The Tomb of Darius

It is significant that the association between Darius and Ahuramazda is stressed in a particularly monumental way on the rock-cut façade of the king's tomb (Fig. 3.9). The tomb (Schmidt, 1970: plates 1 and 19) is carved into a living rock face approximately 8

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[140] This very same formula is followed by his successors, from Xerxes to Artaxerxes III with little change, outside of the addition of Mithra and Anahita by this last ruler, a practice then later abandoned by successive monarchs (cf. Kent, 1953: 147f-154).
[141] There are scholars who suggest that the city was used for the No-Ruz celebration (see Pope, 1957; andWiesehofer, 2005: 25); others who suggest it was used seasonally by the king and his entourage (Tuplin, 1998); and still some who ascertain it was never used at all, as it remained in a generally unfinished state during most of the 200 years of the empire (Mousavi, 2005).

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km northwest of the royal city of Persepolis. The cliff is over 60 meters in height, and, as attested by a Neo-Elamite relief, it was already a sanctified location in Elamite times (Schmidt, 1970: 80). Root is no doubt correct in ascribing the planning and execution of the tomb relief and its text to the first half of the reign of Darius (Root, 1979: 75).

The shape of the tomb—cruciform—departs sharply from that of Darius' predecessors (Cyrus and even possibly Cambyses had self-standing, gable-roofed stone tombs), but the content of the relief depicts Indo-Iranian ritual practice in the use of fire altars in worship (Root, 1979: 179; see also Stronach, 1969; 1973; 1978). The form of the tomb and the iconography were copied by Darius' successors, although no other tombs are specifically labeled (Root, 1979:73; 162). There are a total of six additional similar tombs at or near the site—with three identical tombs placed adjacent to Darius' at Naqsh-i Rustam, and three near Persepolis terrace itself (Schmidt, 1970: 80).

The principal relief on the tomb of Darius seems to echo the Bisotun relief in certain important respects. It depicts the Persian king and his god, with adjoining trilingual inscriptions. But instead of a post-battle investiture scene, the relief depicts the Persian king, standing on a three-stepped platform before a fire altar with a three-stepped top and base (much like those found at Pasargadae[142]). The ruler holds a bow with his left hand,

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[142] Schmidt, 1970: 11; cf. Stronach, 1978: 138-145. In trying to imagine how the twin stone plinths at Pasargadae (Stronach, 1978: pl. 103b) might have been used in conjunction with an altar of this same type (e.g. Stronach, 1978: fig. 72), Stronach, following Galling (1925: pl. 14, fig. 5), has suggested ""that the ruler might have mounted the south plinth" in order to worship [his deity] before an [equally] elevated altar "on the north plinth".

and his right hand, beyond his bent elbow is raised towards Ahuramazda. Above the

tableau, at the apex, is the winged disk with an emerging figure, extending a ring in one

hand, and raising the other to the Persian king.[143] On the far left in separate, superposed

panels are three Persian nobles, labeled as Gobryas, spear bearer of Darius; and

Aspathines, bow and axe bearer of Darius (Schmidt, 1970: 86). The third figure is

unidentified. These figures symbolize the loyalty of Darius by chief supporters, even if it

is notable that they are now depicted on a far smaller scale than Darius. This tableau is

placed upon a platform or throne supported by 30 subjects of the empire, representing the

30 lands (Root, 1979: 73). This upper register is supported by a central register depicting

a palace façade that probably makes reference to Darius' own palace at Persepolis

(Schmidt, 1970: 81). Below, a blank register completes the cruciform shape.

An iconographic anomaly is seen in this monument. To the right of the winged disk, in

the same numinous realm, there is a disk in which the lower edge forms a crescent.

Rather than attempt to identify this puzzling feature with a rival deity, it may perhaps be

justified to associate it with a further aspect of the supreme god.[144] Beyond this, the

principal motif at Naqsh-i Rustam, i.e., that of the king in an attitude of worship before an

altar, recalls Neo-Babylonian and later cylinder seal designs where the altar of one or

another god is sometimes complemented by the presence of a horizontal crescent in the

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[143] As Root has put matters, "there can be no doubt that this scene is of religious
significance" (1979: 163).
[144] Cf. Merrilees (2005: 67 with pl. 23, 59), where on the seal a crowned bust occupies a
circle with a crescent along the lower edge. However, it must be noted that this example
has no provenance. Note also examples of Achaemenid period jewelery of a slightly later
date that depicts the bust of what appears to be Ahuramazda encircled by a disk with a
thickened crescentric lower edge (cf. Harper et al, 1992: 251, fig. 179).

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upper field (Cf. Merrillees, 2005, pl. 13, 31). Another striking difference in this image is that Ahuramazda's crown is depicted as the same as Darius'—perhaps this signals a post-Bisotun change in attitude exemplified by the ruler in his DSk inscription, "Ahuramazda is mine, I am Ahuramazda's"(Kent, 1953: 145).[145] Truly, Darius means to make his image inseparable from the god, at least within the direct milieu of the ruling elite and administrators of the empire in Persia proper. At the same time there is no change in the tenor of the closely associated inscriptions at Naqsh-i Rustam, which only name Ahuramazda and which refrain from mentioning "other gods".[146]

After enumerating the many countries that bear the throne in the sculpture, Darius emphasizes the desire that his subjects follow the will of his god: "O man, that which is the command of Ahuramazda, let this not seem repugnant to thee; do not leave the right path; do not rise in rebellion"(DNa.6.56-60; Kent, 1953: 138). Ultimately, his words are meant once again to justify his rule and warn against further revolts. In death, as in life, Ahuramazda acts as Darius' benefactor and protector.

3.5.7. Monuments in Egypt

Very few other known monumental structures attributed to Darius show evidence of the winged disk, and these derive solely from the context of Egypt. But, while Ahuramazda is invoked in the texts of several of the Achaemenid monuments in Egypt, the symbol of the winged disk may have had no more than somewhat ambivalent associations with

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[145] I would like to thank David Stronach for this observation.
[146] Even in the PF texts, Ahuramazda is given pre-eminence—where other gods are listed, Ahuramazda is always first in any list of gods (Stronach, 1984: 486).

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Ahuramazda. Here, for the most part, the symbol appears to retain its' original association with the Egyptian deity Re.

3.5.7.a. The Shallufa Stele—Suez Canal (Canal of Darius)

The Shallufa stele (Fig. 3.10b) is one of four fragmentary Achaemenid granite stelae that came to be found at various dates after 1799 on the banks of the Suez or Darius canal, which at one time connected the Nile to the Red Sea.[147] The canal was 84 km long and it appears to have been flanked originally by at least 12 stelae set up by Darius (Brosius, 2000: 42).[148] The Shallufa stele was reconstituted from 31 small fragments (Menant, 1887: 5), and is engraved on two sides. While the highly reconstructed obverse carries a hieroglyphic inscription (Menant, 1887: 12) that was clearly intended for a local Egyptian audience, the reverse face carries a trilingual Old Persian, Elamite and Babylonian inscription (Menant, 1887:15; Brosius, 2000: 47).

The obverse depicts two facing Egyptian fecundity figures that are commonly identified with the Nile inundations of Upper and Lower Egypt. Symbolically, they may be said to represent Upper and Lower Egypt (Roaf, 1974: 74). Above the figures an Egyptian sun disk likely was placed, as on the similar Mashkuta stele (Fig 3.10a)(cf. Roaf, 1974: 89, fig. a). Below this scene are cartouches (one, a royal cartouche provides the name of

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[147] See Menant, 1887: 1-6; Posener, "Le canal du Nil a la Mer Rouge", Chronique d'Egypte 26, 1938, 259-273; and more recently, Roaf, 1974: 79ff.
[148] At present there are four known stelae: three at the Egyptian Museum in Cairo; and one (Shallufa) at the Museé du Louvre in Paris (Brosius, 2000: 47).

Darius), and below the cartouches the hieroglyphic text recounts the offering of the two lands of Egypt to Darius.

The reverse (fig. 3.10b) is organized in a similar fashion, although there are notable differences. Beneath a sun disk with drooping wings two facing royal figures lift their opposed, leading hands above two centrally placed cartouches. That on the left—the better preserved of the two—contains the name of Darius (Root, 1979: 64). Significantly, perhaps, the winged disk is appreciably different from the type of winged solar disk to be expected on the "Egyptian" or obverse side. Thus, although the curved wings are normal on Egyptian stelae, a yokeshaped object appears above the disc and un-Egyptian tendrils (and a tail) appear below the disk. Elsewhere, the stele bears a trilingual cuneiform inscription, in which Darius proclaims he is great king, and hails Ahuramazda as the great god who created the sky, the earth, man, happiness for man, and "gave to Darius a kingdom that was great". Darius further claims in the inscription that he seized Egypt (Vallat, 1974: 163).

In the Shallufa stele, then, a recognizably Egyptian version of the sun would likely have appeared on the "Egyptian" side of the stele, and somewhat different sun disk appears on the "Persian" side. In the context of the reverse side of the stele, we may see a symbol, therefore, that could be associated with the winged symbols of the Persian homeland while also illustrating a conscious effort to remain inclusive in a territory that was indeed far from Persia. At the same time, the inscription on the reverse specifically refers to Ahuramazda; therefore, while the rhetoric is specific, the visual message (which could be

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more readily "read") is, to some degree, non-specific. As the stele was placed on a slightly elevated hill near the canal, and visible to any who passed, the images acted much as the adjoining hieroglyphic and cuneiform texts; which, as described by Lloyd (2007: 101) were "designed to serve the same function, i.e. to fix and eternalize what they describe in a position of physical prominence". He posits that the function of the text was to make clear that the canal was meant to serve to deliver goods from Egypt to Persia (*ibid*: 104). In both word and image, the stele expressed the role of the subservience of Egypt to Darius.

3.5.7.b. The Hibis Temple in Egypt

Although the Canal Stele depicts a winged disk and invokes Ahuramazda, it is not a religious monument, *per se*. However, several other Egyptian monuments are attributed to Darius—the Apis stele from the Serapeum at Memphis, and the Temple of Hibis in the el-Khargeh Oasis[149]--and Root considers these to be religious monuments (1979: 123). It is significant that in these "religious" monuments, Darius is shown as an Egyptian Pharaoh performing Egyptian rites, standing before files of Egyptian deities (Root, 1979: 123-127; Briant, 1996: 491-2).

Davies has posited that the Hibis temple had two possible building periods during the rein of Darius, and notes a visual difference in the work between Hypostyles B and M (1953: vii). According to Lloyd, however, Darius effectively had little to do with the structure,

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[149] Although cf. Lloyd (2007: 107-111), who questions rightly the direct involvement of Darius in the construction of the actual temple.

outside of adding several dedications (2007: 105-111). This new dating may help to explain the lack of reference to Ahuramazda in this temple context.

Hypostyle M has a dedicatory inscription of Darius that states he "reviewed" the temple; and on the north frieze he proclaims that he has "built this house anew" and renewed the monument to it original form (*ibid*). Neither area near the dedications on Hypostyle B or M depict winged disks, and the deity mentioned in this context is "Amun Re of Hibis". While sculpted winged disks (Fig. 3.11) occur in the architectural décor of the Hibis temple on the doorway reveals,[150] Ahuramazda is not evident in the line-up of deities represented in the other reliefs or inscriptions (Darius dedicates the temple only to Amun Re, and offers wine to the deity, and milk to Mut of Hibis)(Davies, 1953: 17). In this context, and certainly as Ahuramazda is absent in the text of these monuments, the winged disk must represent an Egyptian deity. In fact, the hieroglyphic inscriptions from el-Khargeh invoke Amun-Re—"may they give him hundreds of thousands of anniversaries, and celebrate the jubilees on the throne of Horus, at the head of the living, like the sun for ever and ever…the disk of Amun-Re…illuminating the two lands" (Droiten, 1940: 240; Brosius, 2000: 91). At the Hibis temple, it is clear that the winged disk represents not Ahuramazda, but the solar disk of Amun Re.

In sum, it is evident that, where Egypt was concerned, Darius had no inclination to pursue an exclusive association with Ahuramazda; instead, he could even use the winged disk in a strictly Egyptianizing manner. This contrasts sharply with his promotion of

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[150] Refer to Davies, 1953: 72-73; also pl. 12, 26.

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Ahuramazda and the associations of the winged disk in the Persian homeland; but it also reflects what is seen in glyptic and minor arts of the periphery.[151] Perhaps, in Egypt, the winged disk was already too firmly entrenched in the traditional iconography as representing the solar disk and the power of the pharaoh. An attempt at an alternate association would probably have failed.

3.6. Summary: The Winged Disk as a Dynastic Marker

One can only speculate on the true reasons for Darius' vigorous promotion of Ahuramazda. No such exclusive focus on a single deity appears to have characterized the reigns of Cyrus or Cambyses. And although an Achaemenid era[152] stone cylinder seal bearing a winged disk was found at Pasargadae (Fig. 4.24), it is unstratified and cannot be firmly ascribed to the reign of Cyrus or Darius (Stronach, 1978: plate 162, fig. a-c). It is of note, however, that Root's (1998) analysis of the seal style compares it to the PF "mixed style" of seal design; and she suggests not only a late 5th century date for its manufacture, but that it may have actually been made at Persepolis itself in a seal workshop (*ibid*: 186-187). Therefore, there is enough circumstantial evidence to suggest it is not a product from the reigns of either Cyrus or Cambyses. In essence, there is no proof whatsoever of Cyrus or Cambyses even using the winged disk motif during their reigns, in glyptic or monumental art; and there certainly is no evidence of the invocation of Ahuramazda during the early pre-Darius years of the empire.

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[151] See Chapter 5.

[152] Cf. Root, 1998: 180, who discusses the dating of the seal at length and suggests a date of "late Darius, early Xerxes".

Nevertheless, it is apparent that the symbol for Ahuramazda came to carry significant weight following its introduction under Darius, especially within the Persian heartland. Accordingly, it is more than likely that Darius, who frequently refers to himself in his inscriptions as "a Persian Man", was indeed promoting the worship of an existing Persian—and no doubt also Iranian—deity at the expense of other deities including, in all probability, long entrenched Elamite gods.[153]

In this general context certain vestiges of prior religious practices at Pasargadae cannot be ignored. Of special interest are the stepped stone fire altars that are attested at Pasargadae (see Stronach, 1978: 145). In almost every particular they appear to have been nearly identical to the example depicted on Darius' tomb at Naqsh-i Rustam. It is true that one must use caution while making this tenuous connection.[154] The use of fire in worship was an ancient Indo-Iranian trait not necessarily connected, for example, with the worship of Ahuramazda.[155] However, the above noted similarities in the material record could point to a degree of religious continuity between the reign of Cyrus and Darius, even if the former ruler seems not to have introduced any major divine symbol in order to advertise the nature of his own religious convictions.

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[153] In as much as the Elamite version of the Bisotun inscription defines Ahuramazda as the "god of the Iranians"(Stronach, 1984: 485), it can be presumed that Ahurmazda must have occupied a position of importance over a wide area for some very considerable time before Darius chose to make his personal allegiance to the god central to those who wished to identify with him.

[154] Note also that Stronach and Roaf (2007) have not rushed to connect the presence of a stepped fire altar at Median Tepe Nush-i Jan with the worship of Ahuramazda. Equally, Waters (2005: 99) is possibly correct to maintain that too little is known of Cyrus' personal religious affiliations to connect his beliefs to Mazdaism.

[155] See Frye's comments (1984: 175) regarding the possibility that fire altars may also have been borrowed from the Elamite tradition.

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In the case of Darius there is also, I would argue, an interesting progression in what I take to be Darius' highly individual interpretation of Mazdaism. This is detectable, in diachronic terms, in both text and image. For example, the high horned crown of Darius' first, early symbol for Ahuramazda at Bisotun clearly outranks his own low, crenellated "campaign crown". Then, next, his extraordinary assertion that "Ahuramazda is mine, I am Ahuramazda's"(DSk, 2.3-5; Kent, 1953: 145) would appear to find vivid visual expression in the notable parity of the two crowns in Darius great funerary relief at Naqsh-i Rustam, which may have been carved within the last decade of the sixth century.[156] By this time Darius had hit on a final preferred version of his symbol for his god: a symbol that would subsequently remain a permanent emblem of his dynastic line.

How these monumental statements of devotion and political alignment compare to the more subdued and mundane world of administration, religious and daily life in the empire is a question we will now consider. Further, we will examine how this relationship between king and god is expressed outside the homeland of Persia. Perhaps this will enhance still further our understanding of the motivations behind the great king's visual program, not least with reference to his exclusive appropriation of the winged disk within this context.

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[156] On this date, cf. especially Stronach, 1978: 304.

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4.1. Introduction

Darius' visual program[157] distinguishes him as a ruler who was not unaware of the exploitive power of royal and elite art, through which his political aims and ideals could be disseminated. The multiple message-laden scenes which adorned his royal palaces-- seemingly infinite lines of Persian soldiers, mythical combat scenes with unnatural and frightening winged beasts, and the image of the ruler himself in various postures of splendor, authority and elegance—served to stress Darius' power, whether royal, military or mythical. These political-religious images were intended to be gazed upon not only by the king and his courtly entourage[158] but also—and equally importantly—by visiting dignitaries and subjects of the empire. Garrison (2002: 145) has suggested that the audience for Achaemenid palace reliefs would have been "important, sophisticated and literate", as well as receptive to visual codes and ideological messages embedded in both text and image (whether in the monumental, or in smaller artifacts such as administrative tablets). In this way, the palace environment itself created a visual discourse for the viewer: a sort of microcosm of the world as it should be in its ideal form, with the Persian

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[157] Note especially Darius' use of rock-cut reliefs—at Bisotun and Naqsh-i Rustam—as well as the vast diffusion of the court repertoire in the imagery of seals of the period. Among other references, see Schmidt (1953, 1957), Root (1979), Boardman (2000), and Kaptan (2002).

[158] A parallel example of the use of political imagery in palace décor can be seen in the carved stone orthostats from 9th-7th centuries BCE Neo-Assyrian palaces, such as those at Nimrud, Khorsabad and Nineveh, and the strategic placement of narrative scenes within the sphere of movement of both the royal court personnel and foreign dignitaries. See Russell, 1999, for a full analysis of the combined use of text and imagery in the context of Neo-Assyrian palaces.

king at its nucleus. But what existed within this sculptural realm was only one facet of the Persian king's program of royal propaganda, which also extended into other aspects of his subjects' existence, in both larger and smaller dimensional scales.

Beyond the palace walls, and much grander in overall scale and execution than the palace reliefs, stood Darius' cliff-side monuments. The religiously infused yet highly political reliefs at Bisotun and Naqshi-Rustam stood open to view in far less controlled environments than those images within the bounds of the royal abode and administrative center. In other words, they could be viewed at least from a distance by anyone traveling near the monuments. For those unable to gaze directly upon Darius' more grandiose statements of Persian rule, small-scale copies were dispersed throughout the empire for the visual instruction of all, high or low, so that none would be ignorant of the identity and irrefutable authority of the newly proclaimed Persian king. In this manner Darius asserted his claim to power and, more specifically, to the throne of his newly defined homeland: Achaemenid Persia.

Monumental messages—such as those expressed in the relief at Bisotun and its adjoining inscriptions—may be the most direct in visual impact, yet the authority of imagery can be said to transcend size, and the dissemination of visual codes or messages through much smaller and more portable objects—as is the case with seals—is often no less potent.[159]

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[159] Irene Winter (2002: 53) reinforces Pierre Amiet's suggestion that seals in 1st millennium BCE Mesopotamia "probably *do* constitute the primary visual medium of the age." She further discusses the effect scale itself can have on an audience—often different from that of monumental relief.

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The repeated viewing of an image can in the end lead to its acceptance within society, even if the image in question is originally foreign or not intrinsically part of the commonly acknowledged body of visual cues peculiar to a particular social group. The image or symbol—made part of the visual corpus of acceptable cues—is then able to repeat a given message or refer to multiple meanings within the context of its re-use.[160] As a result, imagery that may have at first appeared quite foreign, could become an expected norm. This is a process of normalization through repetition—and it is a process that characterizes both Achaemenid glyptic and palace reliefs alike.

Through various mediums, the Persian king diffused both messages and symbols which, although to some degree influenced by or based upon pre-existing Mesopotamian traditions (and thus, part of a widespread and accepted visual or discursive "norm"), should be considered Persian in their own right,[161] and thus subject to a conscious process of repetition and integration into the pre-existing artistic *koine*. However, in terms of repetition, seals (artistic, symbolic, yet ever-utilitarian objects) were probably the most commonly used medium in the ancient world upon which a symbol or message could be

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[160] As noted by Zainab Bahrani (2003: 185-7), the general public in antiquity—excepting elites and scribes—was mostly illiterate, and thus the use of visual symbolism had great potential for both manipulation and for referring to a continuous chain of meanings.
[161] Scholars have observed various possible geographic, cultural and historic sources from which artistic styles and symbols were culled for either integration or reinvention within Achaemenid royal art. For Greek themes, see Farkas, 1974, and Boardman, 2000; for Mesopotamian parallels in general, see P. Calmeyer, 1994: 131-147. This being stated, Achaemenid royal art remains an ingenious reflection of the hybridization of Persian, Egyptian and Mesopotamian art forms into a fresh, new artistic language meant to reflect the international character of the largest empire of the era. Also of relevance is Feldman's (2007) discussion of the concept of "style-as-meaning" to suggest a conscious reference to earlier heroic ideas embodied in Mesopotamian art, specifically that of ancient Akkad.

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transmitted and infinitely repeated—and often in rather mundane, non-political contexts such as the procurement of food rations. This special quality makes the glyptic and seal impressions of the period an inestimable resource for symbols, messages and meanings reflecting politics, religion and even cultural cues. This is certainly true in the case of Achaemenid Persia.[162]

In the following pages, Achaemenid-era glyptic from the "homeland" of Parsa will be reviewed with a special focus on the appearance of the winged disk in the special, administrative and royal context of Persepolis. After a brief historical introduction to the corpus of tablets with seal impressions found at Persepolis, iconographic patterns will be charted according to seal type or context. The results will then be analyzed with the preceeding questions on culture, religion and identity (as articulated in chapters one and two) in mind. It will be shown that between the two specific corpora of the Fortification and the Treasury tablets, there was a distinct specificity of iconography in terms of context of the seals[163] used for impressing documents.

4.2. Achaemenid Era Glyptic and Impressions

The imagery found on Achaemenid era seals and their impressions offers a varied assortment of symbols with a complex array of associated meanings. Large numbers of actual seals purported to date to this period are to be found in both museums and private

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[162] Garrison (2002:70) has suggested that the PF archive "represents the single most extensive and important corpus of visual images from the early years of the reign of Darius I".

[163] Note that, in this chapter, for ease of discussion the term "seals" will be used to identify seal impressions unless specified otherwise.

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collections, yet few have an archaeological context or certain date of manufacture (Garrison, 1991:1) and their documentary value is compromised accordingly.[164] However, a number of fully excavated and contextualized corpora of seal impressions (or bullae) do exist in areas as diverse as Memphis, Egypt (Petrie, 1910: 41); northwest Anatolia (Daskyleion)(Kaptan, 2002); southern Mesopotamia (Nippur, Ur, and Uruk)(Bregstein, 1996; Collon, 1996); and within Iran itself (Susa and Persepolis)(Garrison, 2002:121). These precious examples, and the archives with which they are associated, allow for the possibility of proper dating[165] and contextualization of the use of such seals. To-date, the number of seal impressions dating to the Achaemenid era that are known include the following: 185 impressions from Daskyleion dating to the reign of Xerxes;[166] 657 impressions from Nippur (the Murasu family archive)[167] dating from the reign of Artaxerxes I to the reign of Artaxerxes II; a total of 60 legible impressions from Wadi Daliyeh (4th century BCE Samaria);[168] eleven hailing from Ur; [169] several dozen from Memphis in Egypt;[170] at least 29 from the site of Susa;[171] 77 from the Treasury archive at Persepolis,[172] and, from the Persepolis Fortification archive, 1,174 distinct seal designs [173] culled from 2,087 tablets (first published by Hallock in 1969). Of these Persepolis

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[164] Garrison (1992:2) notes only one securely dated seal from the time of Darius—the trilingual or London Darius seal—even though he refers to its provenance as "problematic". Cf. Collon, 1987:130.
[165] While it is true that heirlooms could be in use contemporaneously, this still comprises a limited number of examples, especially within the larger corpus from Persepolis.
[166] Kaptan, 2002:2.
[167] Bregstein, 1996: 53-64.
[168] Leith, 1997: 243-245.
[169] Collon, 1996: 65-84.
[170] Petrie, 1910: 41.
[171] As identified by Amiet, 1972: 284.
[172] Garrison, 2000:121.
[173] Garrison, 1999: 1.

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Fortification archive impressions, most are cylinder seals, with only 28 stamp seal impressions in the corpus (Hallock, 1969: 78). Of the many different seals impressed on the tablets, a mere 86 (less than 10 %) are inscribed (Garrison, 2002: 70)—including eleven in Aramaic, one in Greek, 3 trilinguals, and the rest in cuneiform scripts (Elamite and Babylonian).

Although some of the seal impressions reveal tendencies towards uniform stylistic trends (i.e., the "court style" versus the "modeled style")[174] or common themes (heroic encounter scenes versus scenes of ritual),[175] the patterns of iconographic usage and their intended messages are not readily apparent. A case in point can be found in scenes carrying religious themes in Achaemenid glyptic.[176] Those seal impressions that can be categorized as religious in theme, or at least containing religious components, demonstrate an assortment of practices and beliefs which seem to diverge substantially from the tenets of the royally acknowledged religion of Mazdaism.[177] In addition, the

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[174] This trend towards a uniformity in style can be seen not only in glyptic, but also monumental reliefs, both of which shared common iconographic details by 502 BCE when official Achaemenid art may be said to have been canonized (Garrison, 1991:18).
[175] For example, Garrison cites the following breakdown of iconographic themes within the PF archive: 313 heroic encounter, 367 human activity, and 494 animal and geometric designs (2000: 124).
[176] As defined in chapter 2 (pp. 34-42), "religious" must encompass that which is deemed suitable for ritual use; that which is related to a context of worship; or, that which is numinous in nature.
[177] This contradiction is also mirrored in economic texts, where offerings to deities other than Ahuramazda are documented. See Koch, 1977; Briant, 1996; and now Henkelmann 2006, who documents the types of deities found on tablets from Persepolis in his study on Elamite and Persian acculturation in Fars. Although there is much debate about labeling the official royal religion, at present there is no scholarly concensus on what it was— suggestions include a form of proto-zoroastrianism; an already codified version of Zoroastrianism descending directly from Zoroaster himself; or some other creed which

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religious iconography in sealings from the homeland (and most specifically from tablets from the Persepolis Fortification and Treasury texts) differs occasionally from those that are found in satrapal centers, such as from Daskyleion or Memphis, or even—closer to home—those from Babylonia.

This chapter, while examining the religious content of the glyptic iconography used in the early Persian empire, does not attempt to provide any stylistic analysis. This has already been undertaken by a number of noted scholars, including Porada, 1963; and Garrison and Root, 2001.[178] These identified seal styles include the court style, mixed styles (I and II), the Persepolitan modeled style, fortification style, broad and flat and linear styles, and diverse styles (cf. Garrison and Root, 2001: 16-20). This analysis will instead focus on the context and use of religious symbols within the corpus of Achaemenid glyptic from the homeland,[179] with special attention given to the intended audience of the images, and the inferred message(s). Only excavated seals will be used for the main arguments in this study.[180] Needless to say, an unexcavated seal, i.e., one without an archaeological

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used both fire in worship and the major deity Ahuramazda, descending from earlier indo-Iranian traditions but independent of Zoroastrianism. The most neutral term in use which identifies the god of the Achamenids but does not label the religion *per se* is the term "Mazda-ism".

[178] Garrison (2000:125) contextualizes the PF seal images with subsidiary information such as the name, the nature of the office using the seal, the administrative function of the seal and/or its user, locations where the seal was used, and the social status of the owner, but does not relate specific issues of iconography (such as the pattern of use of religious motifs) to these themes.

[179] The Persian "homeland" can provisionally be defined as the area of "Parsa" much advertised by Darius I in his DPd or foundation inscription erected on the south face of the Persepolis terrace (Kent, 1953: 135-6).

[180] For Muscarella's valuable definition of 'excavated' as opposed to 'non-excavated' materials, see 2000: 6 ff.

context, may divulge something of the stylistic modes of a period, but it cannot divulge the context in which it was used, and, therefore, it is of strictly limited utility. With this in mind, I will concentrate on those examples of Achaemenid glyptic that can claim a firm archaeological context.

4.3 Elite Seals In the Homeland

While Tuplin (1998) successfully demonstrated that the center of Persian power was not a static entity confined by monumental stone columns but, rather, a geographically transient focus embodied by the king himself, the movements of the king nevertheless appear to have been largely concentrated between certain of the chief cities in the geographic center of the empire. Support for the argument for a markedly Persian[181] boundary of central power might be found in the extensive collection of economic texts housed at Persepolis, the grandest of the Persian capital cities. At present, such an extensive royal archive is not to be found elsewhere in the empire;[182] and, if nothing else, one very active "hub" of administrative documentation can be said to have existed at this seat of royal power.

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[181] The term "Persian" is difficult to define in terms of the geography and population in the mid-to late-6th century BCE. See Potts, 2005 and Henkelman, 2006 on this particular issue. See also Koch (1977) for regions involved in trade with the center of power in Parsa.

[182] While economic texts have been found at Babylon, the most extensive known archive remains that represented by the Treasury and Fortification tablets at Persepolis. While this fact may be an accident of excavation, at this time there is no evidence to show that any other royal center contained such extensive archives during the reign of Darius.

Such a locus of royal and economic activity is perhaps the most ideal source for material that may enlighten us concerning royal and administrative usage of specific iconographic motifs in the Persian homeland. The formidable corpus of documentation from Persepolis consisting of over 30,000 clay tablets and clay objects,[183] provides ample material on which to focus this study.[184] The glyptic impressions in this section of the analysis derive almost exclusively from the Persepolis Fortification (PF) and Persepolis Treasury (PT) tablets. And while Susa remains an important if slightly peripheral seat of Achaemenid Persian power (claiming one of Darius's earliest palaces), its place in this discussion can only be relatively minimal due to the nature of its sparse and poorly contextualized evidence. Nevertheless, the known seal corpus from Susa, along with Garrison's (2008) pertinent new dating of the so-called Late Neo-Elamite seal corpus from Susa, will be treated briefly below.

The PF tablets, discovered in the interior rooms and corridors of the fortification wall at the northeast corner of the Persepolis terrace, were excavated between 1933-34 by Ernst Herzfeld with a team from the Oriental Institute. The tablets document administrative transfers or disbursements of commodities in the early to middle years of Darius' reign

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[183] A large number are small, triangular or pyramidal clay objects that have no inscription (called anepigraphic tablets), although almost all contain at least one seal impression. Henkelman's (2004) study on Achaemenid-era uninscribed clay tablets—which he calls "tags" or "bullae"— housed at NINO and elsewhere gives insight into their potential use.
[184] Documentary evidence for the use of religious imagery in the designs of Achaemenid glyptic is also known from satrapal contexts in Egypt and Western Anatolia. The material found in these outlying areas is reviewed in Chapter 5.

(between 509-494 BCE) (Hallock, 1969:1).[185] The commodities paid out include food from royally controlled storehouses given to various types of employees (workers, administrators, artists, court personnel, priests, and even members of the royal family) (Garrison, 1996: 22). Both individuals and groups are listed as receivers in what appears to have been a fixed ration system (Garrison, 1991: 3). A wide range of social classes is documented in the texts, from the highest administrative elite or the royal family, to agricultural workers (Garrison, 1991: 2; 1996: 22; 2000: 156). The geographic area covered by the archive covers an area from Persepolis (Parsa), Pasargadae (Batrakatas), and Shiraz (Tirazzis) to an area northwest along the royal road to Susa (Garrison, 2002: 68). Henkelman has described the tablets as concerned with the handling (as opposed to the production) of locally produced foodstuffs and livestock (2006: 39).

Hallock has divided the texts into two main groups: those which are concerned with large operations (involving the movement of goods from place to place) and those which detail goods distributed to individual consumers (Hallock, 1969:1). He describes 32 classes of texts (*ibid*: 3). Henkelman notes (2006: 39) that the purpose of the archive was to "arrange, survey, record and account for these...commodities". They document the intake, taxation, storage, transport and redistribution of goods to travelers, officials, nobles and gods, among others (*ibid*). Additionally, and of particular interest to this study, a number of texts record either the delivery of commodities to unnamed gods (i.e.

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[185] The history of the tablets of the Persepolis Fortification Archive Texts has been treated previously by various authorities, including Schmidt (1957) and Garrison and Root (2001), who, between them, have published a great number of the hundreds of seal impressions known from this archive.

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PFS355-77, 2030, 1947), payments to gods (PF336-77, 2029), or to individuals who perform religious services (the "K1" texts)(Hallock, 1969:19).

The second archive, originating from the Treasury,[186] was discovered between 1936-1938 in the south-east part of the Persepolis terrace in a block of buildings considered to be the Royal Treasury (Cameron, 1948:1). These tablets, which date to the years 492-458 BCE (or from the latter part of Darius' reign to the 7th year of Artaxerxes I), record payments made in silver from the king's treasury to various individuals (Hallock, 1969: 1). This corpus, which conveys perhaps a different set of users than the Persepolis Fortification texts, nevertheless contains richly varied iconography to complement the analysis of the PF texts.

Analysis of the usage of certain symbols within the context of these two archives has only begun to be touched upon by Garrison (1991, 1999, 2003). At present, a thorough contextualization of the use of seals (i.e., frequency of use in relation to status or office) with religious or numinous components can be expected to reveal substantial information concerning manipulation of such images for a variety of political purposes (i.e., a random versus a purposeful use of given symbols; or the association of high-ranking administrators with certain symbols). For example, as noted by Garrison (1999: 29, f.123), the court style is associated very early on with very high ranking administrators. He suggests (1991: 18-19) that the court style seals specifically created in the late reign of Darius and early years of Xerxes are markers of rank and position, and possibly part of

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[186] Previously published by Cameron (1948), Schmidt (1957) and Hallock (1969).

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a program to disseminate imperial art. Although there currently exists no in-depth study of seal context as related to status and religious practices, an attempt will be made to organize the relevant available published corpus of Achaemenid period seals with a view to opening up this particular domain for discussion and analysis. With this in mind, comparative charts of glyptic context and iconography (Figs. 4.1—4.6) that have been created for the purpose of data organization and comparison, are presented for reference (see below).

4.4. The Database Charts

While I have strived to include as much information as possible regarding seal impression iconography and context in the database charts, not all details can be identified in the database due to the constraints of this forum. Instead, I have chosen to focus specifically on the winged disk and various other numinous symbols found in the glyptic iconography. This is due to my particular focus on reviewing the forms of religious expression found in seal iconography.

In order to contextualize the iconography of the seal impressions, the types of transactions documented on the texts are noted whenever known, as well as the user's name and/or profession. Transactions documented on the Fortification and Treasury texts from Persepolis deal primarily with either economic exchanges or transactions—e.g., flour deliveries made to the palace, or payments in silver—or transactions which represent various types of offerings to a number of deities (such as in the "K" texts of the Fortification archive) (Garrison 1991:3). Questions I pose concerning the significance of

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the types of transactions documented are directly connected to social issues such as the relation of iconography to status or function within the social milieu of the Achaemenid court. With this in mind, seal ownership becomes even more relevant: what types of iconography are found—or not found—on 'seals of office' (i.e., those who use royal name seals and hold high-level administrative positions, such as is demonstrated by seal PT1, a trilingual seal); versus seals of merchants, or even female seal owners (rare but existent), as represented within the corpus from Persepolis. Can we find patterns of iconographic use within the social strata of elite Persian seal owners? Do these patterns—if any—resonate with the idea of an Achaemenid identity? And how, eventually, will this compare to seal iconography culled from indirectly royal contexts, such as satrapal centers?

Besides the different types of transactions and the various reflections of social strata that contribute to the corpus of seal impressions on the PF and PT tablets, the iconography offers a rich range of possibilities in regard to symbolic messages or signals encoded in the seal designs or motifs. This symbolism can be given meaning when contextualized along with type of text or transaction, or even professional or social position. Although it is beyond the scope of the present chapter to survey all possible iconographic combinations and symbols, the motifs treated as most relevant here—specifically, those which suggest a religious component—disclose a substantial amount of information regarding religious, political and social allegiances. As previously indicated in Chapters 2 and 3, symbols which can and should be considered religious in content (or which can at least be understood to contain religious components), range from self-evident motifs

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(i.e., the winged disk), to many less obvious symbols (such as stylized trees) that may be embedded within a greater symbolic language than immediately apparent. In addition, there are several motifs (crowned Persian or heroic encounter) that figure prominently in the corpus, and are included as well. It is useful, therefore, to state specifically the different motifs that will be reviewed in the following analysis. These are listed in Fig. 4.1. Specifically, the listed motifs will be contextualized in relation to their occurrences with the winged disk, potentially one of the more powerful symbols associated with the Achaemenid dynasty in public monuments, and one which figured commonly in the "court style" of Achaemenid glyptic (Garrison, 1999:9). [187]

4.5. Motifs in Question

Earlier in this study (see Chapter 3) I have made a case for the winged disk as representative of Ahuramazda, in the Persian homeland. There are nonetheless an extraordinary number of variations of the winged disk in the corpus, and while some scholars may have an inclination to assume that all winged disks are representative of the same meaning, this may not necessarily reflect the situation. As already suggested by Garrison, (2000: 143), the winged disk is seen in such a variety of forms and contexts that "we are not well served by monolithic interpretations of the image".

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[187] It should be noted here that the "court style", so termed by garrison and Root, refers to seals from the PF and PT archives that reflect a type of glyptic style with particular iconographic traits (cf. 2001: 18) found in use at the Persian capital city. The term "Achaemenid hegemonic style", so termed by Dusinberre (2008: 92-93), refers to the peripheral interpretations of the court style found in administrative glyptic outside the Persian homeland.

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Indeed, a more cautious approach is to divide the various winged disks (or 'winged symbols') into categories that reflect how they are used symbolically, without placing too many inferences on those examples which deviate from the more standardized forms (i.e., the original forms as seen in the earliest known depictions, such as those at Bisotun or Naqsh-i Rustam, and perhaps Susa).[188] For this reason, the winged symbol is represented in the attached comparative charts in several categories. These include the winged disk with figure (WDF)—the most standardized or readily recognizable form which shows a male crowned figure in the winged disk, such as is the case of the example at Bisotun;[189] the winged disk (WD)—a disk with wings but no figure, such as is seen at Susa[190] or on the Canal Stele;[191] the nimbus with figure (NF), showing a floating, wingless disk, crescent or oval with a figure emerging; the simple nimbus (N), an oval, disk or crescent which lacks wings yet floats or remains numinous. While many of these incarnations of a floating winged entity seem likely to reference Ahuramazda, other forms are more questionable in signification. This vagueness or non-specificity has been touched upon in Chapter 3, and may actually represent, as suggested by Garrison, a purposeful blurring of identity or multi-valence in meaning.[192]

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[188] Precise dating is unavailable for most of the Persian king's monuments, including the glazed brick frieze depicting a winged solar disk—likely an abbreviated version of the more 'standard' Ahuramazda— from the palace of Darius at Susa.

[189] See King, L.W., Thompson, R. Campbell, Budge, E.A. Wallis, 1907. Cf. also Schmitt, 1991.

[190] Harper, P. *et al*, 1992.

[191] Mahaffy, J.P. *et al*, 1905.

[192] I would like to thank Dr. Garrison here for sharing his ideas with me on this particular aspect of the winged symbol during a visit to Berkeley in October, 2006.

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Other concerns of the seal iconography which require initial discussion here are the use of the atlas figure (AF), which appears rather prominently in seal impressons from Persepolis and which hearkens back to Neo-Assyrian palace reliefs; the podium creature (PC), a symbol analyzed at length by Dusinberre (2000);[193] and a number of altars (A)—some possibly fire altars such as the type depicted on Darius' reliefs.

Additional numinous symbols found on the impressions reflect a long Mesopotamian tradition, where they appear as representative of various deities, such as the lunate symbol (LS) often associated with the moon god Sin, or the astral symbol (AS), correlated with Ishtar.[194] Even so, we cannot be certain that these particular symbols correspond to Mesopotamian divinities in an Achaemenid context, and allowances must be made for the possibility that they carry entirely different meanings in this new, non-Mesopotamian, locus of power. Owing to their general rarity or illegibility, some symbols, which are perhaps anomalies yet are potentially numinous and/or can be

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[193] Although Dusinberre's association of the representational meaning of the podium creature in ancient Persia with that in the general Mesopotamian artistic koine (i.e., as a marker of divinity) is enticing, it is ultimately not sustainable. Dusinberre suggests in her analysis that the Persian king used this motif to make reference to his association with the divine, yet there is absolutely no evidence or indication that Darius or his progeny considered themselves to be divinized, or on the level of the numinous. More notably, Darius states very clearly in his inscriptions that his existence and rule is owed to " the will of Ahuramazda". While deification of rulers was an occasional Mesopotamian practice, it does not appear to have been part of the Achaemenid tradition. It is important to remember that iconographic reuse of symbols in a Persian context can, as stated earlier, either represent old meanings or attach new ones in their place. In short, the podium creature in this context may be a simple stylistic device used in a new artistic *koine*. One must also take into account the inherent iconographic traditions of any Mesopotamian seal-cutters.

[194] Black and Green, 1992, describe the various Mesopotamian deities and their symbolism.

associated with ritual events, are treated in a separate category. They are simply designated as other symbols (OS). However, they specifically include winged griffins and other *mischweisen*, and an assortment of unidentifiable devices, filler motifs or elements.[195]

As aforementioned, several relevant symbols that are not necessarily to be categorized as strictly numinous but, rather, as highly politicized and/or prominent will be included. These symbols are: a) Palm trees (P);[196] b) with a subsidiary category of stylized trees (ST);[197] c) heroic encounter (HE); and d) and crowned figure (CF), which in all likelihood represents a royal figure.

Whether a seal impression includes an inscription (IN) is also noted, and the language used for the inscription. The social status of the owner or user of the seal used to make the impression, as denoted by the title, office or personal name given on the inscription or tablet upon which it is impressed, is recorded when known. However, social status is often very difficult to ascertain from the seal impressions and the names alone.[198] The gender of the seal owner is also given when available, as are indications that a seal belonged to a royal male or female, even if used by or given to a third party. Last, the

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[195] Cf. Garrison & Root, 2001: 512-527 for a complete list of additional symbols included in the glyptic designs of the Persepolis Fortification archive.

[196] Note the Elamite use of the palm tree in glyptic iconography. Cf. Alvarez-Mon, 2007: pl. XXXXVIII, fig. 114.

[197] As pointed out to me by Marian Feldman, stylized trees could be used in Neo-Assyrian art, perhaps to symbolize the land of Assyria (Cf. Porter, 2003, for varying interpretations of the Assyrian"sacred tree" motif in Assyrian art).

[198] Inscriptions that include an occupational designation are extremely rare in the PF archive (Garrison, 1999:10).

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number of occurrences and the earliest known date of use of the seal used to make the impression are also listed, if known, with a view to noting the frequency—or infrequency—of the use of given motifs during Darius' reign.

In sum, by breaking down the seal motifs into categories and getting a sense of the frequency of their use in conjunction with the designated offices, we can perhaps more clearly define the occurrences of numinous motifs—and most specifically those of the winged disk—within one or another social context at Persepolis. With the glyptic information thus categorized, statistics can be used to demonstrate the frequency of, or in which context, motifs such as the winged disk occur on personal or office seals. This data, in conjunction with that culled from an iconographic analysis of 'seals of the periphery' in Chapter 5, can therefore reveal information about the extent of the use of the winged disk, and its' importance within Achaemenid glyptic symbolism, in seal impressions from the Persian homeland.

4.6. Analysis of Database Charts (Figs. 4.2-4.6)

As a whole, the corpora of seals and impressions contained in the charts 4.2-4.6 yield important results for this particular inquiry. Discussion of the data should be prefaced, however, with the idea that there are a number of inherent (and, at present, inevitable) biases to the analysis. By far, the biggest obstacle to arriving at definitive, quantifiable information from the archive is the situation regarding the current state of publication of the PF seals. At present, only approximately one third of the Persepolis Fortification archive has been published, and the remaining two thirds are still in preparation.

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Additionally, the PF material that is published deals *specifically* with only one iconographic theme—that of the "heroic encounter".[199] This factor alone—the emphasis on one precise theme within the glyptic corpus—may dramatically skew the statistics derived for the corpus as a whole. There may exist in the published material a scarcity of the types of motifs used specifically in ritual scenes—motifs that may, or may not, be restricted according to context. The two additional awaited volumes of the PF impressions (*Vol. II: Scenes of Human Activity*; and *Vol. III, Animal and Geometric Motifs*), when published, may decidedly alter the findings of the present analysis.

Accordingly, it must be stated that this study is something of a preliminary analysis. As the remaining unpublished PF seal impressions become available, the databases will be updated and the conclusions revised where, and if, necessary. Nevertheless, this study can be of great value as a starting point in ascertaining at least certain very specific points regarding the royal use of iconography in different thematic contexts.

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[199] Mark Garrison kindly sent me a number of the unpublished seal drawings for *Volume II* –specifically, seal impressions in the corpus that contain a winged disk of one kind or another. How these can be integrated into the discussion of the present analysis is a problem, but not one that is insurmountable. Although these particular drawings focus on the winged disk and skew the analysis in terms of the frequency of the occurrence of this motif, we can nevertheless compare the use of the occurrence of other symbols within this particular context.

4.6.1. All Seals (Fig. 4.6)

From the more than 1,174 known seal impressions from the PF tablets, this analysis is based on only 232 of them—slightly more than 20%--as we await the additional 900-plus seal impressions slated for future publication that cannot be included here. Yet even this percentage speaks volumes in reference to the parameters of the present inquiry. Although a total of 393 seals and impressions from the corpus have been published (313 seal impressions of heroic encounter and 3 seals of ritual theme from the Persepolis Fortification tablets; and 77 seals and impressions from the Persepolis Treasury) only 206 (or only about 50%) of these seal impressions and seals depict what I would describe as numinous motifs.[200] If we add the 26 unpublished seals supplied by Professor Garrison, the total usable seal designs for this inquiry number 232.

To arrive at the percentages in chart 4.6, the quantity of occurrences of each individual motif (designated as "#" in the charts) was divided by 232 (the total number of seals and impressions containing numinous motifs). From this formula: $\#/232 \times 100$, it was possible to extract percentages with which to measure the occurrences of the individual motifs in the glyptic archive and therefore numerically extrapolate various details (i.e., how popular or how rare each motif might have been) in reference to the use of these motifs in the context of the core region of Persia, c. 520 BCE-450 BCE.

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[200] It is likely that this number will increase substantially, once Garrison-Root's *Volume II* of the Persepolis Fortification tablets is published. It is expected that many of the scenes of "human activity" in the long-awaited volume will actually be scenes of ritual activity with corresponding religious or numinous iconography.

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The chart of "All Seals" (Fig.4.6) reveals a few unexpected results. For example, it emerges that the crowned figure (CF) appears in a mere 12% to 18% of the entire collection of published scenes in this group.[201] When compared to the occurrence of the palm (nearly matching the crowned figure at 11%) or, more unexpectedly, the lunate symbol (matching or bypassing the crowned figure in occurrence at 16%) followed closely by the astral symbol (at 14%-16%), the importance of the crowned figure in the iconography appears somewhat diminished or, perhaps more likely, restricted. In the context of the Treasury impressions, however, the crowned figure occurs almost as frequently as the winged disk motif, hinting at a variance in the usage of the crowned figure motif between the two distinct archives.[202]

Overall, there is a predominance of the winged disk in the seal designs when compared to other symbols, occurring in at least 20% of the seals. The abbreviated, figureless type of winged disk appears more frequently. Here, we can make the case with numerical evidence that the winged disk (in its many incarnations, both with and without emerging human figure) was one of the most used and, thus, most important and recognizable symbols of the seals of the period, at least within the core area specific to this study. In

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[201] The variations are due to the uncertainty of the existence of a particular motif in said context. For example, a minimum of 27 verifiable crowned figures have been noted on the seal impressions; however, there may be as many as 42 if one takes into account issues of poor seal rolling with resulting unclear impressions, containing missing heads or crowns which ultimately render the images unverifiable. Neither does the writer care to make an assumption about what "should" appear in a given scene. In other words, I have attempted to indicate the minimum and maximum number of possible occurrences of a given motif from which an acceptable average might be inferred.
[202] However, this will remain unclear until all the seal impressions of human activity, in volume 2 of Garrison & Root, are published.

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the Treasury texts, the winged disk occurs with an impressive frequency, ranging from a minimum 46% to a maximum 63% occurrence. Perhaps this is symbolic of a specificity in the use of the symbol in conjunction with those who had access to the Treasury and its transactions. According to Garrison,[203] there are only an additional 26 unpublished seals containing this symbol—still keeping the overall frequency of its occurrence in the PF archive rather low. In sum, the symbol appears to have had particular importance and meaning within the context of the Treasury.

Although there exists a high proportion of scenes of heroic encounter in the published corpus (due to the nature of the focus of Garrison-Root, 2001 on this particular theme),[204] it is significant that even in the Treasury seals, the occurrence of the heroic encounter accounts for approximately 32% of the imagery; in other words, there is about the same percentage of occurrence of the theme within both archives. The second major excavator of Persepolis, Erich Schmidt, was already well aware of the significance of the heroic encounter in royal seals; he associated this motif with expressions of royal power (1957:8).[205] Indeed, this motif was already long familiar in imperial settings in the ancient Near East, most notably, perhaps, in Assyria.[206] It appears in the Persian royal artistic *koine* in full force, gracing key locations in royal reliefs as well as in glyptic designs.

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[203] Personal communication.

[204] It is relevant that, overall, the theme still only accounts for roughly 30% of the total seal imagery.

[205] Following Ernst Herzfeld's resignation in 1934, the excavations directed by Schmidt were conducted under the continuing auspices of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago between 1935-1939. See Schmidt, 1953:4-5.

[206] For examples in Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian glyptic, see Collon, 2001.

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As a whole, the nimbus, atlas figure, pedestal creature and altars have a very low overall occurrence in the published Fortification seal impressions (this is to be expected with the focus on the theme of the heroic encounter). Certainly, in other iconographic contexts outside of the heroic encounter, these motifs will increase in number. However, in the Treasury context, we have approximately the same scarcity of these motifs as in the PF archive; and they represent a fully published, intact corpus of impressions. Apparently, these themes were less enthusiastically embraced by the seal users as a whole. Contrary to these minimally used motifs, un-standardized, stylized trees have a comparatively high frequency in the Fortification impressions. The motif of the palm appears often in the royal name seals of the Treasury, and may represent a special tie with the ruling power in this context of seal impressions; but it is perhaps significant that this association is not seen in the Fortification impressions.

Other symbols occur at the rate of 17% in the corpora, pointing to a high tolerance in the glyptic artistic *koine* for various symbols of gods or numinous creatures that do not appear in Achamenid monumental art. The seal motifs reflect a frequent fascination with both lunate and astral symbols, which, at least in Mesopotamia, would have represented the moon god Sin and the goddess Ishtar, respectively. It may also be significant that lunate and astral symbols occur so often in Achaemenid period glyptic when their use in Achaemenid public monuments is clearly relatively rare.[207] They are, in effect,

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[207] In the latter context the astral symbol only occurs in the topmost element of the crown of Ahuramazda at Bisotun (Stronach, 1997: 7-8) and the lunate symbol is restricted to its occurrences in Achaemenid royal funerary reliefs at Naqsh-i Rustam and Persepolis (Schmidt, 1970: 79-118, fig. 31-38).

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downplayed. The seals point to a general acceptance of the existence of multiple deities by the populace at large (even at the court), at least in part by the motifs found in seals.[208] If these deities and their symbols do not typically appear in the royal, monumental art alongside Ahuramazda, we must ask ourselves why this is so. What is the impetus behind the monumental promotion of Ahuramazada in both reliefs and inscriptions and the seemingly purposeful suppression of symbols of other deities alongside the public image of the great king, while in the glyptic arts—and in actual practice—other deities are being honored in the capital city itself? The patterns of seal iconography from the archives and the periphery shed light on this question, as will be outlined below and in chapter 5.

At this point in the analysis, it may be useful to review each individual, smaller corpus separately before making sweeping statements about the intended meaning of the various motifs in the two main corpora as a whole. If each individual group of seals is initially examined in turn, particular anomalies will not be overlooked in the context of overarching assessments and conclusions.

4.6.2. PF Inscribed Seals (Fig. 4.2)

Since it is possible to extract some social information from the inscribed seals, these seals are of special importance for our study. Thanks to the inscriptions on the seals, Garrison and Root have been able to note the professions of a number of seal owners along with many of their names, and, occasionally, even their places of origin. The archive includes

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[208] Additional evidence for polytheistic practices is well-documented in the texts from the Persepolis archives (cf. Henkelman, 2006).

within it an interesting cross-section of professionals and citizens of the empire, that can be characterized as falling into the following categories: elite administrators, supply and/or apportionment officers, tax collectors, various officers, women, accountants, suppliers, men leading groups, elite guides, fast messengers, miscellaneous receivers, and various travelers (2001: 533-4). From this analysis we discern that many different types of people acquired and used seals in and near Parsa, or that tablets were sent to the royal center from many surrounding regions to be included in the archives. As can be expected, there is a great variation in the glyptic iconography.

Within the seal designs, some distinctions in the usage of motifs, according to profession or status, can be discerned. Some motifs, however, appear to have been almost randomly employed with no apparent social or professional patterns of use in this particular context. For example, the winged disk in its various forms appears in only between 1% to 4% of the inscribed seals.[209] Furthermore, only four of the above-mentioned social or professional categories are associated with this motif in the available sample.

In the first category—seals of office—one would expect to find the most frequent occurrence of the winged disk, especially given the (presumed) association between this symbol, the king and the officers in the court administration. Rather surprisingly, in this group, there is only one verifiable winged disk (PFS 7; Fig. 4.7), out of seven seals of office. The user of PFS 7 belongs to an office in charge of the king's food supply. That

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[209] Note that this variation stems from the extent to which it is often difficult to verify whether or not a winged disk was placed in the topmost portion of a given seal impression. Poor or incomplete impressions both stand in the way of certitude.

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this office is directly related to the royal person and his well-being is of note, not least because the other motifs which appear on the seal are the crowned figure and the palm. Additionally, the imagery on the seal is cut in the "court style". As we shall see, these all signify strong royal and elite associations.

A second office seal (PFS 113)(Garrison & Root, 2001: 88; also same as PTS4), is also a "name seal" of Darius belonging to an office of the Persepolis Treasury, and contains a trilingual inscription, as does PFS 7. Notably, the seal also contains the crowned figure and the palm motifs, and is executed in the court style, but contains no winged disk. The two, iconographically similar, seals both depict scenes of heroic encounter. Another important element these seals share is the way they were employed alone on the respective tablets—a circumstance that points to a high level of authority by each user. With all their similarities, it is of note that the type of texts upon which the two seals were impressed are different. PFS 7 is impressed on a "K1" text,[210] while PFS 113 is impressed on a "T" text.[211] The relation between the two types of transactions is minimal. The factor that seems to determine the types of iconography used in these seals is not necessarily the *status* of the user. On the contrary, it would seem to be the *type* of transaction involved, or something more personal being expressed—such as a cultural cue.

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[210] The K1 texts represented transactions by individuals with religious functions (Garrison & Root 2001: 125).
[211] The T texts represented administrative letters (*ibid*, 11).

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Another instance where there may be a winged disk in the original scene is the seal of an unnamed "supply or apportionment" officer who deals with cattle. The seal in question, PFS 859 (Garrison & Root, 2001: 299), is—significantly—executed in the court style. It is also inscribed, and similarly used alone on the tablet upon which it is impressed, as are PFS 57 (*ibid*: 345)(an Assyrianizing seal) and PFS 113, on a "J" text.[212] Its first known date of use is 503 B.C., as seal PFS 7. However, the seal design, which includes a heroic combat with a male (seemingly non-Persian) holding a scabbard and with arrows on his back, facing a lion rearing on hind legs, does not contain a palm or a crowned figure motif. The fact that the user was involved in royal provision denotes his authority, and thus once again we can associate the cut of the seal and some of the motifs with an elite status—but again there is no winged disk in the design. So, in these few examples, we see perhaps a use of the winged disk, not as a sign of status *per se*, but as a religious or cultural cue.

The results also suggest that the royal name seals may contain some, or all, of what I term the "royal triad of motifs": a crowned figure, a winged disk, and a palm. Along with some or all of these motifs, the royal name seals contain inscriptions. These seals, it must be recognized, were used by elite—or top-level—administrators. Their commonalities suggest a high-level artistic *koine*, with a specific code of imagery, which we shall see repeated in the Treasury impressions in greater number. Yet it does not seem that, in the time of Darius, the inclusion of the winged disk was obligatory in seals used by the top administrators (i.e. the royal name seals). In the slightly later reign of his son, Xerxes, we

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[212] The J texts were associated with royal provisions (*ibid*).

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see more of a focus on using the symbol in royal name seals employed by high-level administrators. This would point to a gradually increasing importance on the use of the imagery codified by Darius.

On the other hand, it would appear that the winged disk must be used in conjunction with certain motifs (either the palm and/or the crowned figure in heroic encounter) when representing the king's royal name seal, used by an office directly under his control. I can suggest here that the winged disk —even if used alone—makes reference to a particular system of users, whether the user of the seal was part of an administrative inner circle or not. Within the PF archive, the winged disk appears to behave somewhat flexibly in terms of the context in which it appears; and as it can be used in conjunction with other motifs, and various styles. It is also not particularly restricted in terms of the types of users in the group of PF inscribed seals. It is notably quite rare (especially when compared to its occurrence in the PT archive, which dates as late as Artaxerxes I), and so may have only just been introduced as a motif in Darius' reign as a marker of a certain cultural or religious status (specifically, the Persian Mazda worshippers). By the time of Xerxes, it is more codified as a symbol of an elite status proffered by the ruler, as seen in the royal name seals of Xerxes.

An interesting variation in terms of motif combination is found on the seal of Irtashduna, daughter of Cyrus and wife of Darius.[213] Although the seal (PFS 38; Fig. 4.8) depicts a Nimbus with emerging figure, it does not contain the more common motifs found on the

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[213] Garrison, 1996: 24; Garrison & Root, 2001: 84.

other royal name seals; and is cut, not in the court style, but in the modeled style. Instead of a crowned figure, winged disk, or palm in this royal princess' seal design, one finds a nimbus with emerging form, a stylized tree symbol, a lunate symbol and various other motifs, uncommon on other royal name seals. The seal first occurs in a text dated to 501 BCE, and thus we know that it is used concurrently with the aforementioned royal name seals of Darius, which do contain some or all elements of the triad of royal motifs. Whether the lack of the "royal triad" in Irtashduna's seal is due to the nature of her position within the royal court or to her gender, one can only speculate. There are only two other known seals used by females in this corpus. One, an uninscribed (PFS 1437s), belonged to Mizapirzaka, of which little is known (see Garrison and Root, 2001: 211). In the inscribed seal context there is the seal of Irdabada (PFS100; Fig. 4.9), of elite status (she was believed by Hallock to be a member of the royal family, and Koch suggests perhaps a wife of Darius)(Hallock, 1969: 24; and Koch, 1981: 234). The seal is a cylinder, and depicts a heroic control scene. The hero wears a garment of "uncertain type" (cf. Garrison & Root, 2001: 387). It contains no other identifiable common motifs we have seen repeatedly on the royal name seals. Again, whether this is due to her status, gender, or simply personal choice is not known.

It is appropriate to note here the oddly dissonant seal motifs on the seals of the royal family as a whole. Although the name seals of Darius or Xerxes tend to express or reflect an Achaemenid *koine* of artistic style, the other royal seals—i.e., seals used by the royals themselves—do not. For example, the two seals of Parnaka, an uncle of Darius (PFS 9, Fig. 4.10; and PFS 16 in Garrison & Root, 2001: 92), carry none of the above-mentioned

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"elite" symbols: they depict heroic encounter or heroic control of lions with a figure wearing a very Assyrianizing robe. There are no obvious references to the Achaemenind Persian imagery seen on royal name seals. The two seals of Parnaka are cut in the fortification and modeled styles, respectively. In all probability, Parnaka chose not to employ the elite motifs commonly seen on the royal name seals used by administrators, as a mark of his 'special' (less common) royal status.[214] Further, the purported actual seal of Darius is quite different from the royal name administrator seals, and leans towards an Assyrianizing style. The Darius seal (Fig. 4.11), provenance unverified and purported to derive from Thebes, Egypt, depicts the Persian king in a scene echoing Assyrian reliefs: the king rides in a horse-drawn chariot hunting lions in the vein of Ashurnasirpal II or Ashurbanipal I. But in this seal, a winged disk with emerging figure hovers above the king—a nod to the Assyrians once more, perhaps, but also, I suggest, a reference to Darius' codified Achaemenid visual program. It would seem that the seals of the more important social echelons mimicked the art of the former great empire of Assyria; while those in service to the Achaemenid dynasty were more likely to use certain symbols appropriate for their level of service to the king. The royal name seals, therefore, and their ensuing "royal triad" of motifs and even "court style" appear to have been created as markers of service and allegiance to the great king.

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[214] Garrison (2007:9) notes that there was an Assyrianizing "flavor" in the royal family's seals. He suggests that this demarcated a difference in elite status compared to the users of royal name seals. In other words, only the most elite of the Persian court used Assyrianizing motifs in their seals.

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The crowned figure appears to be just as rare as the winged disk in the inscribed seals. Seemingly somewhat out of context, the motif also appears on the seal of an unnamed supply officer (PFS 79) (Garrison & Root, 2001: 160) who deals with grain and wine. There are no other distinctive features to be noted about the seal, other than it is cut in the fortification style. Two personal seals in the group also contain the crowned figure (PFS 139, Garrison & Root, 2001: 324; and PFS 1428, *ibid*: 334). Both seals belong to Matukka, who is receiving beer rations while *en route* to Persepolis with a large number of workers. It is plausible that Matukka had a special position as an overseer for royal projects,[215] and this could account for the use of this particular symbol. But there is too little information to make a clear connection between the motif and a restricted elite use.

I am not aware of the atlas figure appearing in the inscribed seals (it does occur on the uninscribed seals rarely, e.g. PFS 1071, Garrison & Root, 2001: 102). The pedestal creature has no occurrences. These motifs would be aesthetically awkward in scenes of heroic combat, anyway, and their lack may simply be an artistic choice made by the sealcutters. There are a small number (3) of stylized trees in various inscribed seals (while in the uninscribed, there is a far greater number—19). The palm also figures in five seals (versus 12 in the uninscribed) that are categorized as "seals of various travelers". For example, seal PFS 1276 is noted as belonging to Mirinzamna (*ibid*: 107). He receives flour rations and travels from Susa to Kerman. His seal is created in the fortification style, but there is no available date concerning the earliest known use. There is nothing about the seal to indicate that the user was an upper level administrator, yet a

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[215] Garrison & Root, 2001:324, 334-5.

stylized palm motif is freely used in the seal. The same is true of PFS 1362 (*ibid*: 103), belonging to Harrashtamka, who receives flour rations. The stylized palm appears here too, and, once again, not in an obviously elite context. The palm occurs only about 5% of the time—less frequently than the winged disk, and only in office seals and seals of various travelers of unknown status. We could look at this rare usage of the motif in several ways. Either the use of the palm motif was more controlled than the winged disk motif, in which case we might have to infer an elite status for Harrashtamka; or, perhaps, the palm motif carried allusions to the land of Persia as opposed to the royal family, and could be used by various others, perhaps specifically travelers.

Somewhat surprising is the common use of the lunate symbol, which appears to be the most popular numinous motif in the inscribed heroic encounter seals at 9%. The use is also widespread across different professional and social categories. There seems to be no significant relationship between the various professions or social categories and the appearance of the lunate symbol, and the motif was freely used. There may be a correlation between the subject matter of the seals—heroic encounter scenes—and use of the lunate symbol. Vis-à-vis the winged disk, it may have served as a less restricted, yet equally apotropaic, motif.

A number of other symbols (griffins, mythological winged beasts and unidentifiable "filler" motifs) are also used in the seals (4%-8%) with no apparent patterns of use in relation to status or profession. The glyptic of the archive, overall, does not seem to have been a highly controlled art. While the winged disk, crowned figure, and palm appear less

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commonly than other motifs, perhaps restricting them to an elite and/or culturally specific circle, various other symbols were used throughout the different professions and categories in non-specific ways.

What can be surmised from the inscribed PF seals, most of which date to the early years of the reign of Darius, is that there was very little control of specific motifs—even those found in the "royal triad"—when used *individually*. There is evidence, however, that the triad combination of a royal figure with a winged disk and palm tree can signify the king, and that these motifs appear to be used *together* only when found in a royal, elite context. One striking aspect of these seals is that, with but one exception, the court style is employed whenever the winged disk is depicted. There may be a strong correlation between social position and the style in which the seal was cut; and also the use of certain motifs. Most specifically, in this archive, the use of the winged disk may denote a special cultural or group cue.

Very significantly, there is a complete absence of the use of any common numinous symbols, or any of the royal triad motifs, or the use of the court style in the seals of the various elite guides and messengers who travel outside the region of Parsa. This can be construed as stemming from their lower status (at least as non-administrators). In addition, their transactions were not exclusive to Persepolis and the nexus of power that it represented; accordingly there was no call for one of the special elite codes that characterized the seals of those who formed the upper ties of the Persepolitan hierarchy.

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4.6.3. PF Uninscribed Seals (Fig. 4.3)

It is not of course possible to speculate too deeply about seal ownership where uninscribed seals are concerned. Nevertheless, certain observations can be made with reference to glyptic choices that occurred at the center of the empire. Thus, while the winged disk rarely appears in contexts outside of the court style in the inscribed seals, it occurs on the uninscribed seals in a wide range of styles: the mixed style, the court style, the fortification style and the modeled style. In this context, there is simply no parallel between the winged disk symbol and the style in which the seal was cut.

In the absence of inscriptions, which itself may denote lower status seals, the presence of the winged disk clearly denotes something other than an "elite" status[216]—perhaps, as an indication that the holder of the seal held a particular position in the service of the king, or as a signifier of ethnic, social or religious affiliation. It is also of interest to note the variation in other symbols that appear alongside the winged disk in this group of impressions. Two seals used initially as early as 500 BCE—PFS 1189 (which depicts a crowned figure and a winged disk in the design; Fig. 4.12) and PFS 851 (also with a winged disk and a crowned figure, just discernable even though the head of the figure has been omitted in this impression; cf. Garrison & Root, 2001: 136)—it is significant that both include a royal figure with the winged disk in the seal designs. Here, we have a correlation between the use of the two motifs. However, another seal, PFS 62 (*ibid*: 184),

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[216] Elite status here is representative of either royal, noble or senior administrator's status—such as that demonstrated by the non-royal use of royal name seals. In conjunction with elite status, of course, particular symbols are in use, as the discourse of this chapter has attempted to state.

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does not contain a crowned figure, nor any other motif that might relate the presence of the winged disk in this context to ties with elite or privileged status. The stylized tree in the design is an anomaly in its unusualness. The same goes for seal PFS 514 (Fig. 4.13), which contains a winged disk and either a stylized tree or an altar (it is difficult to tell which is being depicted), as opposed to a palm. Seal PFS 196 (Fig. 4.14), again corresponding in date to circa 500 B.C.E, does not have any distinctive features other than the fact that the "drooping" wings of the disk recall the abbreviated "Egyptian" version of the motif that occurs on both the canal stelae of Darius and in glazed brick designs at Susa. Seal PFS 538 (Fig. 4.15) curiously contains not only a winged disk motif (just discernable by the bottom half or tail at the top of the incomplete impression), but also an astral symbol. In this example, in other words, we appear to see the icon of the king's deeply revered god, Ahuramazda, depicted alongside the symbol of a second god—an unusual combination in Achaemenid glyptic art.[217] But note that this seal is neither a royal name seal nor that of a top administrator.

There are diverse combinations of symbols in this group of impressions. The crowned figure motif appears alongside the lunate symbol instead of the more typical winged disk in seal PFS 326 (Garrison & Root, 2001: 180), which is also cut in the court style. However, in this context of so-called elite iconography, one would expect the image to include a winged disk as opposed to a lunate symbol. This seal design demonstrates that, even in the court style seals, Ahuramazda was not the only depicted deity. In terms of

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[217] Even if it is a combination that occurs, as observed in note 42 above, in the royal funerary reliefs at Naqush-i Rustam and Persepolis.

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finding the combination of winged disk, royal figure and palm in this group of uninscribed seals, this "royal triad" is conspicuous by its absence. This reaffirms the restricted use of these three associated motifs together to an elite and/or privileged strata of society.

In this group of impressions, the palm motif is found in a number of seals, and cut in various styles. In the context of uninscribed seal designs it is clear, in fact, that the palm is not a restricted motif, and appears more frequently than in the inscribed corpus. The stylized tree symbol occurs in as many as 20 of the 84 uninscribed seals (24%). But although the tree motif can be seen to figure prominently, it is not standardized. It nevertheless was a preferred motif, perhaps having universally accepted connotations.

The lunate symbol occurs in 27% of the uninscribed seals (or in 23 out of 84). It is, of course, intriguing that the lunate symbol is so much more popular than the winged disk in this group of seals versus the inscribed seals, where it fares poorly. In addition, it is equally worth noting that the astral symbol occurs in 29% of the uninscribed seals. In other words, the most important motifs in this group are the astral and lunate symbols, whereas these same two symbols only appear on inscribed seals at a rate of 9% and 4%, respectively. It would seem more than likely, therefore, that those who were unable to commission an inscription and who were not part of the elite system (due to social or economic factors) either preferred or were obliged to employ these latter symbols which, used in this way, did not intrude on the prerogatives of more advantaged sections of society. At the same time this dichotomy may also document the tolerance of the royal

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administration toward the use of a wide range of religious symbols by the populace at large. Overall, much as in the URIII period seals, certain motifs demarcate the place and authority of the seal user within the administrative hierarchy (cf. Winter, 1987: 59-89). Here, it can be said that the royal name seals in this context did the same.

It is probably worth noting that many of these seal designs appear to be used first in the early years of Darius (circa 500 BCE), at a time when he most needed to cater to his closest supporters. That is to say that Darius almost certainly saw the need to create a visual language with which to unify the more powerful elements in his administration. This could explain the apparent specificity in the use of certain combinations of motifs. It was within these codes that the king, his family, his entourage, and members of his extended administration were probably able to find their new-found status reified and duly reinforced.

4.6.4. PF Unpublished Seals Containing the Winged Disk (Fig. 4.4)

This small group of drawings of a corpus of 26 unpublished seal impressions—all containing the winged disk motif—will only be discussed briefly, in view of their impending publication by Garrison and Root. These seals express an entirely different approach to the combination of motifs found on seals showing the heroic encounter. For example 72-75% of these seal designs can be described as ritual scenes. The crowned figure appears in up to 11 out of 26 of the impressions, a relatively large proportion. The stylized tree is another relatively common symbol, occurring at an equal or higher frequency (in 23-31% of the seals). Other motifs that occur more frequently in this

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predominantly ritual context (as opposed to in the context of the heroic encounter) are the atlas figure (at 29%), and the pedestal creature (from 16%-29%). The palm does not occur at all with the winged disk in these scenes of human activity, and the lunate symbol only once. The astral symbol is found in a mere four instances. These percentages stand in stark contrast to those that obtained in the groups of seals previously considered. Once again, there seems to be a connection between the genre of scene and the iconography of the seals. As already observed, the heroic encounter scenes are predominately more secular, perhaps representing king (crowned figure) and country (the palm); whereas the ritual scenes seem to more usually depict the principal Persian deity in conjunction with the crowned figure. This is not unusual in itself. It will be of great interest to compare the additional scenes of human activity, when published, to discern the percentages of occurrences of other numinous motifs versus the winged disk in this context.

In this corpus, the winged disk in its two primary incarnations (with or without an emerging figure) occurs at a rate of 77%, with the remaining seals containing variations on the nimbus, with or without an emergent figure. The nimbus, one could suggest, may be another abbreviated version of the Ahuramazda symbol, or conceivably another deity entirely. As Garrison has already noted, there is a lack of standardization in the symbols, in terms of style or even use. Several of these seal images have powerful political combinations of symbols. One example, PFS 91 (*forthcoming*, Garrison and Root), is a ritual scene containing a winged disk, and depicts a royal (?) figure standing on a pedestal animal, receiving a ring (of kingship?) from Ahuramazda. Here we find certain echoes of the relief at Bisotun, Darius' most political public statement regarding his kingship.

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Thus, the scene — which masquerades as religious due to its inclusion of several numinous motifs — is highly politicized. The iconography on the seals may be subtle, but the symbols were undoubtedly representative of understandable messages from the king to the royal administration.

4.6.5. Treasury Seals and Impressions (Fig. 4.5)

The Persepolis Treasury (PT) tablets date to a period that runs from the reign of Darius I (522-486 BCE) to that of Artaxerxes I (465-424 BCE), and for the moment they provide the most complete published documentation of the types of iconography that occur on the seals from the region of Persepolis. Furthermore, by comparing the seal imagery from the Treasury to that known from the Fortification context, we can begin to see differences in the usage that obtained in the two archives from the same site. Such differences may be explained, in part, by the different kinds of transactions that inspired the creation of these two archives, as well as the temporal aspect of the PT archive itself (late Darius to early Xerxes). For example, the Treasury archive documents are records of expenditures made specifically at Persepolis, and therefore a majority are memorandums or orders directing payment for work performed at the capital by various builders and artisans (Cameron, 1948: 12). However, while the PF archive also contains letter orders and memorandums, the PT archive contains more of the letter variety; while the PF archive has a majority of memorandums of payments (*ibid*: 25).

The texts, seals and seal impressions from the Treasury can be broken down into three major chronological divisions: the first, dating from the reign of Darius the Great; the

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second, from the reign of Xerxes; and, finally, those items which cannot be placed with certitude in either of these reigns. A number of the seals are inscribed with a ruler's name. Nonetheless, it is believed that such seals were used by administrators in elite positions (much as in the PF corpus) to whom the seals may well have been given by the king himself in order to denote special degrees of power and privilege (Schmidt, 1957:13). It is suggested by Schmidt that at least five of ten (and possibly 6) administrators active at the time owned or used royal name seals (*ibid*). These powerful individuals appear to have been responsible for the supervision of construction at Persepolis, and, as far as can be determined, they were all of more or less equal rank (Schmidt, 1957:13).

The seals that can be verified as having been used during the reign of Darius number only seven out of 77, but important combinations of motifs are seen in the three that contain his trilingual inscription in Old Persian, Elamite and Babylonian. Seal # 1 (PT4673)(Fig. 4.16) depicts what may be a crowned figure (the figure in Persian robes possibly wears a royal fillet, and is thus assumed to be a version of the royal hero; cf. Schmidt, 1957:7) in a heroic encounter with a griffin. The scene depicts both the hero and griffin standing on pedestal creatures. There is a palm motif at left, near the terminal border of the inscription. Both the palm and pedestal creature carried religious or ideological connotations in Pre-Achaemenid iconography.[218] The seal was used by the administrative official Darkaush, who ranked equally or in a greater position to the treasurer at

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[218] Cf. Dusinberre, 2000: 160, for a comparison of the Mesopotamian and Persian use of pedestal creatures in glyptic.

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Persepolis (Schmidt, 1957:13). It is of special note that there is no winged disk in this particular scene, although the image contains other elite symbols. But it is difficult to maintain whether the original seal was fully impressed in this example. It is unclear if indeed a winged disk existed in the original seal design, or if it were omitted.

However, another seal of Darius, Seal #2 (PT4658)(Fig. 4.17) used by Artataxma, does contain the habitual combination of motifs for royal and elite glyptic as seen in the PF tablets, with the crowned figure in heroic encounter, fighting against griffins. The seal design also includes two palms instead of one, and a winged disk with emergent figure. The emphasis on the palm in this scene is interesting. It is also of note that the winged disk occurs in this context of a trilingual seal of Darius once again, this time in the treasury archive.

A third seal with a trilingual inscription in the name of Darius (Seal 3; PT4860)(Schmidt, 1957: pl.3), which was used by Uratinda, depicts a crowned figure in a heroic encounter. There is a palm in the scene, but—again, as with seal #1—no winged disk. In comparing these three aforementioned seals, it is clear that, while the winged disk was not a necessary component for the most high-level administrators' seals, the palm tree was integral, at least in the treasury seals.

Two further seals in this particular corpus, Seal 14 (PT4506)(Fig. 4.18) and 24 (PT4844)(ibid: pl. 8), include a winged disk with still other combinations of motifs. Seal 14 appears to have belonged to Aspathines (Schmidt, 1957:13), who is identified in

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image and inscription in Darius' funerary relief at Naqsh-i Rustam as the king's axe-bearer (Kent, 1953: 140). The seal's monolingual inscription is in Elamite. PTS 14 is Aspathines' second seal—the first, PFS 1567 is his first (it is attested only in the fortification texts)(Garrison, 1998: 116). It is potentially significant that both seals of this important Persian noble contained winged disks in their designs. Since the design of PTS 14 depicts an apparently religious or ritual scene (two affronted Persian figures standing on pedestal creatures hail a winged disk with emergent figure), the presence of the winged disk without the palm motif is in keeping with the iconographic formulas already noted.

Seal 24 (PT 4844)(Fig. 4.19), which includes both the palm motif and the winged disk, depicts two facing Persian guards flanking the palm. It was used by Appishmanda, and is also inscribed in Elamite. This seal, although not containing a crowned figure, nevertheless contains compelling iconography—and the guards flanking what may be the symbol of the land of Persia underline the mainly political context of the image. There is also in this seal design an echo of the secondary Apadana stairway relief, depicting Persian guards flanking a central inscription (cf. Schmidt, 1957: pl. 22). Seal #4 (PT 4332)(Fig. 4.20) appears to have belonged to the Treasurer himself,[219] and may have been a royal name seal (Schmidt, 1957: 13). However, there is no palm motif, and the existence of a winged disk is unverifiable in this incomplete seal rolling. Instead, one finds the crowned hero in an encounter with two winged, human-headed crowned bulls. The seal—unlike the others—has no inscription. It is of interest that the seal of the

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[219] Schmidt, 1957: 13.

Treasurer, who presumably occupied one of the more important positions in the administration, attests so few of the already observed Achaemenid court or elite motifs. Notably, the heroic encounter is apparent, and this is observed as a marker of elite social placement in the peripheral seals (see Chapter 5, pp. 145-192).

A fragmentary image of seal #33 (PT4675)(*ibid*: pl.10) belonged to Artadara "who is chief" (Schmidt, 1957:13), and depicts a (possibly Persian) archer hunting a lion with bow and arrow, and a dead lion in the background. The scene contains the lunate and astral symbols, but no winged disk. Artadara was an administrator, and one can suppose he was wanting to affirm his place in the Persian elite social system by using the heroic combat motif. It is remarkable, however, that the numinous motifs should not include Ahuramazda. Feldman has suggested (personal communication) that there be the possibility that "within the elite iconographic system, there were competing social, religious or ethnic groups vying for their own iconographic conformity". I find this suggestion compelling. Was more than administrative rank required, perhaps, of those who could use certain symbols that appear rarer in the archives? Could social or religious affiliation be a greater deciding factor than previously imagined? There is some suggestion that the winged disk, at least in the Persian homeland, represents affiliation with a specific group—perhaps the Mazda-worshipping Iranians.

The four royal name seals of Xerxes on the other hand each display a monolingual Old Persian inscription, and, without variation, at least two or three of the components of the

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"royal triad": the palm tree, the winged disk[220] and the crowned figure. They are also distinguished by scenes of heroic encounter. Seal 6 (PT4749)(*ibid*: pl. 4) belonging to Cichavahush, contains no winged disk, but does contain a pedestal creature within the heroic encounter, as do several high-level seals that can be dated to Darius' reign. Seal #8 (PT4471) (Fig. 4.21) exhibits two royal figures in heroic encounter, with a winged disk and the palm motif in the same scene. It should be noted that all the winged disks in this group are of the abbreviated form without an emerging figure, whereas both types of winged disk were used in the reign of Darius. This may have been a stylistic choice. Contrary to various speculations on the point, the preference for one form over the other was not necessarily determined by the available space on the seal,[221] although occasionally this may have been a factor.

If we compare these seals, which are verifiably directly tied to the ruler via their inscriptions, one can indeed distinguish a pattern of privileged royal motifs in the imagery. In addition, when comparing the two subgroups, there are patterns of 'elite' iconography in use. This supports my suggestion that it was a particular *combination* of motifs on the seals that tended to be restricted in use on seals distributed by the ruler himself for use by his top administrators. However, it must be stressed once again that these privileged motifs—the crowned figure, the winged disk, and the palm—when used in isolation from each other, appear to be acceptable motifs for use in non-royally

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[220] Except seal #7 (PT612; Schmidt, 1957: pl.5), which is badly rolled and thus renders the existence of the winged disk unverifiable.
[221] Compare PT 4471/seal #8, with an abbreviated winged disk, to seal PT 4830/#11 (cf. Schmidt, 1957: pl. 5).

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administered seals; yet even so, they still can retain their importance as representative of symbols of an elite status (i.e., note the iamgery on seals 25, PT4421, Schmidt, 1957: pl.8; and seal 32/PT4704, ibid: pl. 9, both containing the palm motif, however none of the other motifs in question). At the very least, they act individually as semiotic devices to flag association with a particular cultural, ethnic or social group.

Only one seal in the corpus (PTS 28, *ibid*: pl. 9) contains an inscription of Artaxerxes I, and it contains none of the aforementioned motifs, either in combinations or individually. The scene is martial in theme, and depicts the king leading nude captives by a rope. Could this signal a change in the visual code under this third ruler of the Achaemenid dynasty? However, seal #5, initially used during the reign of Xerxes, and containing the motifs appropriate to the royal triad, was used into the reign of Artaxerxes I. Apart from this example, there is no information about which kinds of motifs were more popular during Artaxerxes' reign, or later Achaemenid kings, at least in glyptic.[222]

Treasury seals of the third category, i.e., those of uncertain date with no inscription, frequently exhibit different motifs from those found on the inscribed seals—much as the situation already reflected on the seals of the PF tablets. Many of these seals (27-29%)—unlike the inscribed seals of the Treasury—can in fact be said to illustrate "ritual" scenes. In particular, there is a predominance of the winged disk (27-34%) in seals of this kind, far outnumbering occurrences of other numinous motifs. For example, the

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[222] In monumental reliefs, the visual program adheres quite devotedly to Darius' original vision.

lunate symbol occurs in only 12% of the seals; and the astral symbol occurs in only 1-3 instances. Although the incidence of the lunate symbol is rather high compared to that of other "secondary" numinous symbols, it still does not compare in popularity with the symbol of Ahuramazda in terms of the Treasury group seals. On the other hand, as we have seen, the lunate symbol occurs with great frequency in both the PF seals and in uninscribed seals from the Treasury. These particular iconographic traits lead me to suggest that the inscribed seals must delineate a privileged group—and it is more of these who employ the winged disk in their seal designs. The fact that even in the uninscribed Treasury seals the winged disk more frequently appears, doubly supports its suggested association as a marker of inclusion in a special group. It is possible that more of these seals date to the reign of Xerxes. If we compare the inscribed seals, the winged disk is more consistently appearing in the later, post-Darius seals. To me, this suggests a greater social acceptance of the signaled meaning of the symbol. Its introduction in the time of Darius and its repetition in both monumental and glyptic eventually led to its adoption into the royal, administrative visual vocabulary in a more comprehensive manner.

The winged disk is found in both forms (with and without emerging form) and, additionally, there is a high occurrence of the nimbus figure with emerging form. In a number of seals (all scenes of worship) the nimbus and the winged disk are found together (seals #16, 17, and 18; Schmidt, 1957: pl. 6). The crowned figure appears often with the winged disk (eight instances), but never with the nimbus unless it is a joint scene

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with the winged disk.[223] Several seals contain atlas figures (#18, 19) and pedestal creatures[224] (#15, 16, 18 and 23; possibly #17; Schmidt, 1957: pls. 6, 7) alongside the winged disks, and the altar motif appears often—but not exclusively—with the winged disk hovering above. The two exceptions—seal #61 and seal #62 (Schmidt, 1957: pl. 13)—are Neo-Babylonian seals in which the spade of Marduk is visible.

There is only one presentation scene in the group, a rare theme in the seals. In seal #26 Schmidt, 1957: pl. 8), a winged disk hovers above a seated monarch. Additionally, Schmidt (1957: 9) identified a number of the scenes as representing Persians in worship (#16, 17, 22). These scenes also contain winged disks. Perhaps here there is the strongest evidence of a correlation between the winged disk, not just as a social marker, or suggesting the distinction of being a Persian, but specifically a Persian *Mazda* worshipper.

The palm figures at the terminal end of an unusual scene, depicting figures on a boat with a pointed prow, oarsmen and a large fish swimming beneath the vessel (Persepolis Treasury seal no. 32; Schmidt, 1957: pl. 9). The top of the image is almost completely cut off, but a small hint of a possible winged disk appears above the boat. The scene is somewhat unusual, and outside the typical Persepolitan artistic *koine*. The motif may reflect a rare moment of experimentation on the part of the seal designers. It is a secular scene, in keeping with the more frequent PF use of the palm motif in the same context.

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[223] This may confirm that the figure in the nimbus does not represent the ruler himself.
[224] The pedestal creature appears in both ritual and heroic encounter scenes.

4.7. Actual Seals Found in the Treasury

A few actual seals were also found in the Treasury. Schmidt suggests, I think rightly, that these seals were not used in the Treasury on the texts, but were dropped there during the confusions that attended the destruction of the site in 330 BCE and were probably the property of non-elite individuals (1957:15). This circumstance could help to account for the relative lack of similarities to the iconography attested in the tablet impressions. The winged disk occurs only twice, while the lunate symbol is found three times, and the astral symbol is only found once or twice. In seal #40 (Schmidt, 1957: pl. 11)—a cylinder seal—the palm appears with a lion in the image. In this seal design, there is no crowned figure or winged disk, and the scene is unconventional. Several stamp seals (PT 5212; PT 6453) have crescents, crosses and clusters of seven dots—the traditional symbol for the Pleiades in Assyrian glyptic.[225] These seals cannot really be considered part of the Treasury corpus, as their entire life history may be of a different time and/or context.

4.8. Seals of Susa—A Peripheral Capital in the Homeland

The seals and seal impressions found during the more than 70 years of excavations at Susa[226] are rich and varied, however there is little in terms of glyptic to account for the Achaemenid period occupation at the site. As Amiet has noted in <u>Glyptique Susienne,</u> the corpus representing this period is "strangely poor, in both quantity and quality"

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[225] See Carter & Dever, 1996: 47.

[226] Cf. Mecquenem, 1905, 1925, 1927, 1928, 1934, 1943; Jequier, 1905; Legrain, 1921; Scheil, 1923; Rutten, 1950.

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(1972: 284).[227] This is somewhat surprising considering the importance of the city as a traditional center of Elamite power; and the fact that Darius and a number of his successors built palatial structures at the site.[228] The material from Susa reflects very little of the intense organization and administration of Persepolis. Even in terms of the seal designs found at Susa, there is a mere echo of the visual program instigated by Darius at Persepolis. We cannot discount the problems inherent to this corpus—missing and misplaced material; dispersed and undocumented tablets or seals; and, most significantly, the potential loss or destruction of material evidence that occurred with the early excavations of the site. [229]

The designs found on the Achaemenid period cylinder and stamp seals or their impressions (on bullae or their fragments) cover typical themes generally found in glyptic of the period (i.e., hunt scenes or heroic encounter). One seal (2226: Amiet, 1972: pl. 190) depicting a standing Persian guard holding a spear echoes the monumental art of the Persians at both Susa[230] and Persepolis. Amiet notes that there is little Greek influence in the stamp designs (such as that seen on some examples from the Persepolis Treasury corpus),[231] and a number of Egyptian imports or copies of scarabs are also included in the group dating to this period (Amiet, 1972: no. 2230-2242, Pl. 190). Overall, there is no

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[227] My translation.

[228] Amiet, 1974b; Boucharlat, 1990b; Boucharlat et Labrousse, 1972. Perrot, 1981, 1989.

[229] Amiet outlines the problems with the corpus in detail in his comprehensive study of the glyptic from Susa (1972: 1-3).

[230] Standing guards holding spears are prevalent in the glazed brick friezes of Susa (cf. DeMecquenem et al, 1947: 49-53, figs. 25 and 28), and the stone orthostats of Persepolis (Schmidt, 1953: pl. 22).

[231] Amiet, 1972: 284.

distinct uniformity to style or subject matter to be found in the seals and their impressions dating to Achaemenid rule.

While there are fine examples of Persians (occasionally crowned) hunting animals (2204; 2205; Pl. 189, Amiet, 1972: 285); or engaged in heroic encounter with beasts and winged monsters (2206- 2212; 2227-2229; all Pl. 189, *ibid*: 285), there are only a small number that are of relevance to this particular study and its focus on the winged disk.

For example, (Fig. 4.22) #2203 (Sb1971. Amiet, 1972: 284, Pl. 189, 37). This impression of a cylinder seal found at Susa has no exact find location or excavation season listed. This information has evidently been lost. The design of the seal used to make the impression is probably the most Persepolitan type in the corpus. It depicts a crowned, Persian male in heroic encounter with winged beasts. A winged disk of the abbreviated type found on the Susian brick friezes hovers above; in the terminal field at right is a palm tree. The hero and winged beasts stand atop podium creatures, also winged (perhaps sphinxes). This seal impression is very important to the discussion, as it makes a direct connection with the Persepolitan administrative seal types, in both content and style. While it is unknown if the seal was actually used at Susa, or if the already impressed bullae traveled from another administrative location (i.e., Persepolis) to the city, this demonstrates a continuity in the language of the visual program and its importance to the high-level administrators within the region.

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Another interesting seal—a cylinder—is #2205 (Sb1486 (M107); Amiet, 1972: 285; Pl. 189)(Fig. 4.23). It was found in the 1930-31 season. This seal is carved with a scene of a Persian hero hunting a wild boar with a spear. Above the boar hovers an abbreviated winged disk. Underneath, on one end of the seal (as a stamp), two animal protomes are carved sitting back to back. The style of the seal is reminiscent of a poorly executed court style seal. The Persian hero wears the typical royal pleated robes seen on other seals; but it is not as neatly depicted as seal 2204 (*ibid*), for example. The Persian hero occurs often in the PT and PF corpora; and the animal protomes hearken to the carved stone column capitals of the royal cities. Another seal, #2210 (Sb1476; Amiet, 1972: pl. 189) depicts a crowned figure in heroic combat with two rams, and a winged disk containing 4 wings layed out vertically in a highly unusual position. Amiet himself describes it, not as a winged disk, but as a *"grandes rapace volant horizontalement"* (1972: 285).

Seal # 2311 (Sb5574; Amiet, 1972: 292, Pl. 193) is a rectangular seal, carved on 4 faces and is an uncommon shape. Its faces display 1) a palm; 2) a lion and crescent; 3) a crescent on a base; and 4) a person in a schematized Persian robe extending his hands towards what may be a tree, or what Amiet identifies as a possible fire altar. This oddity is poorly carved and has no comparanda from the Persepolitan corpora. The point of interest with this seal is the possibility that the figure represents a Persian, and the adjoining crescent symbols. This image could then represent a non-Mazda-worshipping Persian. The use of the crescent can also be compared to a circular stamp seal #2229

(Sb6845: Amiet, 1972: 286, Pl/ 190), depicting a nude-headed Persian hero in heroic combat with 2 bovids, with a crescent in the background.

Overall, only a small sample of the seal impressions or seal designs found in the Susa corpus reflect any relation to the iconography of glyptic found at Persepolis. While the winged disk occurs, it does so in iconographic contexts that may or may not echo that of the capital in Parsa. With only one seal design seeming to echo the glyptic used by the top Persepolitan administrators, there is little to point to a strongly politicized iconographic program in the glyptic used at Susa (or on sealed tablets sent to Susa, originating elsewhere). Certainly, the seal designs echo both monumental royal art and the contemporary glyptic, but there is little focus on expressing an elite privileged iconographic *koine*. Again, whether this is due to the site's archaeological history or a less focused administration, this is unknown. There do not seem to be clear patterns of iconographic use on the glyptic used at Susa (or perhaps its direct environs) during the Achaemenid period.

Relevent to this discourse is a significant study by Garrison (2002) that suggests a re-dating of the so-called Neo-Elamite glyptic style. This term relates to a style of glyptic designs found on texts originating from the Susa Acropole and Apadana located by the Mission Francais during excavations; as well as from 38 cylinder seals.[232] These

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[232] 15 of the seals were excavated at Susa, 1 from Ur, and 23 have no provenance. Cf. Garrison, 2002: 65.

examples were studied by Amiet in 1973,[233] who suggested they originated in the period of late Neo-Elamite rule, circa late 7th to early 6th century BCE (1973: 24-5). Garrison, through a significant comparison with seal impressions found on the Persepolis Fortification tablets dating to the reign of Darius, finds strong parallels in the glyptic style and imagery, leading him to suggest a redating of the "Neo-Elamite" style to the late 6th century—specifically between 550-520 BCE (*ibid*: 92). Additionally, he suggests that the style originated, not in Elam, but in Anshan. In rethinking the geographic origin of this seal style, he calls the genre "a Perso-Iranian phenomenon" (*ibid*). In this way, Garrison relates the glyptic style previously believed to suggest a revival of Elamite identity to perhaps the time of Cyrus II, or later. It would thus reflect the acculturation process between the Elamites and Persians in the late 6th century, and the newly emerging power base. This is significant in terms of the comparisons we can make between art, iconography and symbolism from the time of Cyrus and that of Darius. While we have discussed evidence for (dis)similarities in monumental art and architecture between the two dynasties, there has been little in terms of glyptic to offer such possibilities of comparison.

If, indeed, these so-called Neo-Elamite seals date to a later period than originally believed—namely, to that of Cyrus the Great—then we have proof of a definite trend of an emerging Anshanite-based identity to be compared to the later Perso-Iranian identity expressed by Darius and his successors. In sum, we then have two entirely different royal

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[233] Other scholars who have undertaken studies of this corpus of texts and impressions include Miroschedji, 1982, 1985; Vallat, 1984; Carter and Stolper, 1984; Steve, 1986; Stolper, 1992; Potts, 1999; Waters, 2000; and Henkelman, 2003a.

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personas, royal iconographic programs—perhaps even cultural differences translating into different expressions of identity—manifest in the seal iconography.

4.9. Summary

From these comparisons, we see that, assuredly, there were differences in the usage of numinous iconographic motifs across the two different archives and within their various subgroups. In both the PF and PT archives, the privileged symbols of the winged disk, royal figure and palm were joined to inscriptions and the "court style" of glyptic design. Most often, these symbols occurred together in a context that included a heroic encounter. Indeed, in the repetition of these same elements Darius and his designers created an elite code: a recognizable message that proclaimed the owner as directly tied to the inner circle of power.

Quite distinctly, the most elite seals—those containing the aforementioned motifs—were inscribed in both groups. Overall, it was the Treasury corpus that contained the most impressive quantity of "royal name" and elite seals. This represents a greater emphasis on privileged access to the Treasury itself, or a more powerful circle of users. And while the winged disk figures importantly in the corpora overall, its use is significantly greater in the Treasury corpus. This may be due to the stronger emphasis on ritual themes in this archive, as scenes of ritual have a greater dependence on the presence of the winged icon. It is unknown as to why ritual scenes should be more prominent in the PT archive. This is another important avenue to explore at another time. But I can perhaps suggest that the religion and the political persona of the Achaemenid dynasty became more codified by

the reign of Xerxes, and thus perhaps the administrators with Treasury access simply put forth these codified (and by now, fully recognizable) symbols as their badge of privilege. Also, the slight difference in the types of tablet that were found in each context may indeed have affected the types of iconography represented in each corpus. The Treasury archive exhibits a decidedly greater emphasis on an elite iconography, one that can easily be associated with the Persian ruler.

In the PF archive, the winged disk is used more rarely, and it is the palm that appears to signify inclusion in the systems topmost level. It is significant that the uninscribed seals in both archives contained a high proportion of lunate and/or astral symbols, denoting perhaps an exclusion from the acknowledged inner circle of Mazda worshippers. Whether this exclusion stemmed from social, religious, or ethnic differences is still unclear, but the seals of lesser standing clearly contained fewer of the symbols that were traditionally connected with the upper echelons of Achamenid administration.

To summarize, the glyptic art was a medium rich with variation in terms of what numinous motifs could be included in the designs. While it appears that an assortment of deities could be included on the individual seals, quantitatively, the winged disk predominates. Certainly, in the seals of royal administrators, the symbol was found almost exclusively in conjunction with the palm and the royal hero. It is evident that a significant social and political code of symbols was developing in the time of Darius, and reached its fullest development and apogee during the reign of his successor, Xerxes. This code referred to a special class of the Persian elite—one which identified the user

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with the ruler and thus, perhaps, with the Mazda-worshipping clan of the Achaemenids. In microcosm, this code in the seals reflected a message that was also in the process of being disseminated in reliefs and inscriptions, from at least 502 BCE onwards when the Achaemenid imagery of Darius was given its more or less final forms.

How this translated into peripheral politic and social discourse will now be examined. It will be shown in Chapter 5 that, while the empire's influence reached far and wide in terms of economic and political control, the peripheral areas needed to be impressed with a different message from the great king than to whom his alliances rested. Instead of emphasis on his ethnic (Persian) and religious (Mazdaistic) affiliations, Darius promoted the eternal, well-tested, and (already) age-old image of the "ruler as hero".

Chapter 5: The Winged Disk in the Periphery

5.1. Introduction

In the preceding chapters, attention was given to the ways in which Darius strove to establish a powerful, cohesive visual program at the political center of his empire, i.e. in the Persian homeland of Parsa, that spelled out the main elements of his political identity, as well as his privileged, royal relationship to Ahura Mazda. This special relationship between king and god was duly represented in palatial and monumental settings (e.g., in bas-reliefs associated with palace architecture; on sheer rock faces that were used to depict images of the ruler and his deity), as well as in the glyptic arts (specifically, those employed by the Persian aristocracy, as seen in the seal designs of several of the top administrators of the empire). Through the use of an artistic *koine* disseminated in various media in varying contexts, the Persian king announced and reiterated his close association with the god of the Persians and, hence, his unequivocal right—and that of his lineage—to rule the land of Parsa. Perhaps it was the very placement of this visual propaganda at the core of his dominion, that made for its success. In essence, Darius had only to ally himself with the Persian ruling class—already strongly entrenched in political and administrative positions—to assure his claim to the throne.[234]

The peripheral areas of the empire functioned differently, however, in terms of the place and use of royal iconography and visual propaganda. While the iconography used by the

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[234] For Darius' parallel, and equally effective use of the written word, often in association with powerful visual images, see especially chapter 3.

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king to broadcast his message in the heartland was specific and recognizable, its use in the periphery of the empire differed tangibly. In contrast to the public monuments of western Iran, which stressed the interdependence of king and god, this particular image is virtually non-existent elsewhere; and even the individual icon that was used to represent Ahuramazda is rarely seen in peripheral areas. Even when it does occur, it is almost exclusively found in the minor arts (e.g., in glyptic, or in brachteates), and it occurs less frequently and less ostentatiously than in Parsa. The motif of ruler and god—or simply of the god himself—appears to have been limited in the extent that it was used in the periphery. Of course, context—geographic and social—played a significant role in the choice of motifs that would eventually be used or discarded within Darius' overarching visual program. But there is, fortunately, a rather varied selection of contexts from which archaeological material of the Achaemenid era has been retrieved (especially with reference to seals and seal impressions) and this material can be used to shed considerable light on the issues before us. In fact, these various corpora and their associated contexts demonstrate that there were different motivations for, and sometimes, different responses to the visual images of Achaemenid discourse in regions that stood at some distance from the heartland.

The peripheral regions of the Persian empire under Persian rule are distinguished by the parallel existence of satrapal centers, from which royal power could be disseminated via representatives of the Persian king, and also a number of less powerful, non-satrapal, yet nevertheless economically or strategically important cities, where trade flourished. The

satrapies were run by Persians placed in office directly by the king,[235] in order to ensure control of the diverse regional areas through various means of tax collection and tribute. It was only natural, therefore, that these satrapal centers should reflect something of the language of power created by the king to ensure their own survival and their place within the upper echelons of Achaemenid society. It is not so clear if, or why, the inhabitants of non-satrapal cities—or those in non-administrative positions—would care to emulate royal motifs which signified allegiance to the ruler and a privileged place in the royal administration, when there was perhaps not so much to gain from doing so.[236] It is of interest to compare the findings from both satrapal and non-satrapal contexts and the extent to which the royal artistic program was incorporated into the fabric of peripheral administrations. Comparisons show that the regional use of such motifs differed in various ways when compared to the incidence of royal messages at the heart of the empire.

Even with a limited number of archives and examples to work with, we are fortunate that the few existing and published corpora of seals and seal impressions from the Achaemenid provinces provide a rich range of evidence in terms of types, contexts and geographic locations (see map, Fig. 1.1). In fact, the available corpora cover a fairly wide geographic range, from western (e.g. Sardis, Daskyleion and Gordion), to southern regions (i.e. Ur, Nippur, Sippar, Samaria), and even the south-western territory (Egypt) of

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[235] Briant (1996:93) notes that, without exception, the satraps under Cyrus and Cambyses were from noble Persian families.
[236] Although note that the king could offer gifts and privileges based on merit to non-aristocratic and non-Persian subjects. Cf. especially Wiesehofer, 2001: 37.

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the empire. It is unfortunate that there is something of a lacuna in regards to the eastern provinces of the empire—and this even applies to the under-explored eastern areas of Persia itself. In terms of glyptic especially the central region is best represented, of course, by the Persepolis corpora already discussed Chapter 4, although the region of Susa (which is more anomalous in terms of its real production) was doubtless viewed as almost equally integral to the definition of Achaemenid power.[237]

The different types of archives included in the following discussion of peripheral glyptic material are not representative of all the available excavated material. Such an undertaking would have been too extensive for this concise study. But those selected for review arguably draw on relevant multi-faceted evidence of no little relevance. Thus the selected samples include administrative, funerary, economic and temple-related examples—a satisfyingly broad range of contexts from which to attempt to draw certain overarching conclusions. Royal or official administrative seals are represented by those from several satrapal cities—Sardis, ancient Sparda, in the province of Lydia, Daskyleium in the Troad, Memphis in Egypt, as well as by others from administrative centers in Judea and Samaria (in the region of ancient Palestine). Private economic archives are represented by those found at Gordion and Nippur. One of two known temple archives of the period (e.g. that from Sippar) yields relevant comparanda; and finally there are several pertinent funerary contexts, particularly from Sardis and Ur.

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[237] One should not forget, after all, that Darius promoted his Persian (Iranian) heritage in contrast to the Anshanite (Elamite?) ties which seem to have been espoused by Cyrus the Great. See Potts, 2005, for a decidedly thorough and well-supported analysis of Cyrus the Great's possible alternate origin.

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Comparing the available glyptic from such diverse regions and contexts may indeed provide a sense of the extent to which the artistic *koine* of the ruler proved to be applicable far from home.[238] Above all, such a comparison may indicate the degree to which the symbol for Ahuramazda came to carry intimations of universal Achaemenid authority, regardless of geographic or social context throughout the empire.

In the following four examples of Persian satrapal cities in the periphery, evidence of Achaemenid-period seals and seal impressions made by seals used by the satraps (when available) or top administrators of the different regions will be compared. The different contexts will reveal an assortment of ways that the symbol of the winged disk was used or discarded in the peripheral administration. It will be shown that the symbol, while retaining its power in the central administration in Parsa (and even in Daskyleion and Gordion within Anatolia) it was only rather rarely invoked elsewhere.

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[238] As the known cultural artifacts dating to the Persian period are from diverse regions and contexts, one must keep in mind that these materials have potential limitations as far as analysis is concerned. Due to the many variables involved with the different corpora (i.e., the genre of archive in question, the type of people involved in their use or creation, the differing contexts), there are different phenomena affecting motif types used in the glyptic of the period. Notwithstanding these variables, valuable observations can be made about seal use and iconographic patterns.

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5.2. Case Study I: Regions of Satrapal Power—Sardis and Daskyleion in the Western Territories, Samaria and Judea in Ancient Palestine, and Memphis in Egypt

Notwithstanding Herodotus' claim that the Persian Empire was first divided into separate satrapies by Darius I (3.89-97), some such system may well have evolved during the reign of Cyrus the Great.[239] Interestingly, the satrapies (Fig. 1.1) as such do not account for the full extent of the empire's territory: areas such as Caria, Lycia and Cilicia were apparently under the control of local dynasts, at least in the 4th century BCE (Tuplin, 1987: 114). In Asia Minor, there was a level of autonomy, and governors of the territories were not necessarily Persian (Briant, 1996: 75). The satrap—an Old Persian term (meaning "protector of power or kingdom")—was first and foremost the representative of the Persian king (Briant, 1996: 76). Briant (*ibid*) notes that in the Bisotun inscription several elite Persians are mentioned as *bandaka*; such a term means bound, and implies a personal tie between the king and the officials in question. As protectors of the territories, the satraps were known to control armies or garrisons (*ibid*: 77). In fact, the highest aristocrats had military titles (*ibid*: 322). It is relevant that the highest administrators, or those with the most political power, were culled form the noblest Persian families. Local elites could hold high administrative positions, but they had little political power (*ibid*: 364; cf. Maffre, 2007: 117-118).

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[239] Tuplin (1987: 109-114) discusses the issue of there being 20 tribute paying "nomoi" or satrapies, in Herodotus' account—a number that fails to equate with other longer lists provided by the Persians themselves.

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Considering the political structure of the empire it is therefore in line with other expectations that we should find iconographic links to the central power in the outlying regions. These visual links could serve to strengthen the relationship between the satraps (i.e. the governors of the satrapies) and the Persian king himself. The images used for peripheral propaganda necessarily had to be easily recognizable as being representative of the ruling power.[240] In so far as Darius was concerned, this was a priority, as evidenced by his obviously well-organized and widely disseminated visual program. At the same time is it legitimate to ask if the visual codes disseminated in the periphery were the same as those employed in the main seat of power? Different sensibilities and power struggles were at work in the varying contexts and regions of the extensive empire; and therefore a more varied visual language may have been needed to promote Darius' discourse than might have been immediately expected. In particular, it may be a mistake to assume that any one symbol could represent the empire in its entirety.

Nevertheless, the winged disk, as symbol of Ahuramazda, was arguably the most important symbol for Darius in terms of his early iconography.[241] In this context, this symbol was apparently used by Darius to promote his standing with the Persian aristocracy, at least within Persian proper (see chapters 3 and 4). It is a fine example of an icon that was used to carry an important political message, but in limited social or geographic circumstances. A reflection of this is seen namely in the satrapies, where the message was generally restricted to a limited milieu—namely that of leading

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[240] Root, 1979: 3, 15.

[241] Important in terms of impact and placement, if not in terms of frequency of occurrence.

administrators or elites. Even then, it was not universally applied by any means. Instead, the symbol appears in different manifestations even within the relatively uniform environment of the satrapal centers. There are cases where the winged disk is not to be found at all, even in the seals of the highest administrators (i.e. in Judea and Samaria in the late 5th century) or where it is only found in a burial context on gold brachteates (as is the case at Sardis). This can only be explained in terms of regional differences when referring to the rare case of Judea (see below). However, there can be no such regional explanation that accounts for the contrasting use of the winged disk in the westernmost parts of Anatolia (e.g. Sardis and Daskyleion). In other words, there is no universality or consistency in the use of the winged disk in the periphery.

In contrast, there is both universality and consistency of use in all peripheral areas of the empire (whether satrapal or not) of the Achaemenid hegemonic style[242] in seals, in both center and periphery. Thus in the periphery at least, more important than the symbol of king and god or god alone, both the heroic encounter and the style in which the motif is executed appear to represent the actual Achaemenid reign and the socially bonded elite. This carries social and political ramifications, to be explored further in the concluding chapter. We can conclude (as will be demonstrated in the following pages) that the message of king and his god became secondary outside of Persia proper. Within, it was primary. The peripheral areas, once subdued by Darius after the revolts of c. 522 BCE,

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[242] A term first used and introduced by Dusinberre (2008: 92-93) to describe the Achaemenid Persian"court style" of art, as reflected in the peripheral areas of the empire. The term will be used here as the most appropriate to describe the royal visual program as it appears in glyptic of the periphery. The term 'court style' is restricted to the PF and PT corpus.

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seemed to be less interested in Darius' legitimacy as expressed in Persia, but more interested in being part of the ruling structure itself, through the use of a recognizable visual code.

5.2.1. Sardis

The monumental Lydian city of Sardis is said to have been founded by Gyges in the 7th century BCE. Croesus, who was in power when Cyrus the Great was consolidating his rule in and near Iran, controlled coastal Greek cities, from which he extracted tribute, as well as the entirety of Anatolia outside of Lycia, Cilicia and Cappadocia (Briant, 1996: 44). The capture of Sardis by Cyrus in c. 547BC[243] did much to undermine the power of the East-Greek world—Lydia under Croesus had been a magnificent and important region. Sardis was the first, and one of the most splendid, of the many satrapal jewels in the crown of Persia. The monumental stone masonry of Sardis inspired Cyrus to bring Sardian masons to his capital, Pasargadae; aspects of the tomb of Alyattes, the father of Croesus, may have inspired Cyrus' own memorable tomb.[244] During the reign of Cyrus the Lydian capital became a satrapal seat, occupied by the Persian noble Oroites (Briant, 1996: 75), and it retained its administrative importance for the duration of Persian rule (Mierse, 1983: 100-103). When Darius came to the throne in 522 BCE, Sardis was indeed still a prize possession of the empire, and Darius appointed one of his own brothers, Artaphernes, as Satrap (*ibid*: 104).

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[243] The exact date remains unverifiable. In the past, 547 was taken as the most likely date (cf. Dusinberre, 2003: 11). Recently, Stronach (2008: 168) has proposed 545 BCE as a more probably date for the fall of the city.

[244] Stronach, 1978: 40-42.

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Excavations at Sardis began in 1910-1914 under Howard Butler. In actuality, relatively little of the site has been excavated to-date, and it is difficult to ascertain what parts of the settlement were chiefly occupied during the Achaemenid period (Dusinberre, 2003: 13). Objects located at the site include monumental architecture, ceramics, weapons, sculpture and seals (Hanfmann, 1983: 63-66). In terms of the monumental arts at Sardis, there appear to be no excavated examples of iconographic connections to the visual program of Darius and his successors. The smaller objects reflect a different story.

The elites of Sardis incorporated both new traditions alongside older ones, which makes it difficult to distinguish a unified upper class (Dusinberre, 2003: 128). For example, the mortuary practices shed little light on this issue. Three tomb types exist at Sardis,[245] and it is difficult to associate individual tomb types with either wealth or ethnicity in this context (*ibid*: 1). Because wealthy individuals could opt to be buried in simple cist graves, it appears that choices may have been made on ideological grounds as opposed to economic ones (*ibid*: 134). Dusinberre also notes the impossibility of ascertaining whether a buried individual in any given grave was a Persian, Lydian or Greek (or a member of any other ethnic group), on the basis of grave objects alone; the grave goods appear to mirror a poly-ethnic, elite society (2003: 138-139).

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[245] Cf. Hanfmann, 1983: 53-62. Types of burials include tumuli with stone-built chambers; chamber tombs dug into the hillsides; and simple inhumations in stone-lined cist graves. There is also a rare form of freestanding tomb exemplified by the exceptional "Pyramid Tomb" (cf. Mierse, 1983: 42; and Butler, 1922, for the excavation reports on the graves of Sardis).

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Iconography connected to imperial ideology was used at Sardis, it would seem, to demonstrate wealth, as opposed to ethnicity (Dusinberre, 2003: 128). Through the use of jewelry, seals or stamped gold foil ornaments, the elite could express a new, imperial identity, used to make a clear statement regarding the individuals' social status and identity (*ibid*:146).

For example, of the 34 seals excavated by the Butler expedition (Dusinberre, 2003: 167), a notable proportion demonstrates the use of the Achaemenid hegemonic style—a style that was used contemporaneously with Neo-Babylonian or Greek style seals. All the sealstones found at Sardis have settings that show they were probably worn on the body (Dusinberre, 2003: 168). Using specific iconography on these functional yet decorative objects, the wearer could associate himself or herself with a particular group identity—social or political. One of the seals that was recovered[246] appears, for instance, to be purely Achaemenid. But as far as the symbol of the winged disk is concerned, not one example occurs in glyptic in a definitely Persian context. The only seal example with a winged disk is seal IAM 5133 (Dusinberre, 2003: fig. 95), which clearly depicts a Neo-Babylonian worship scene. There is no focus on the depiction of the Persian god's symbol in the glyptic so far discovered at the site. Nevertheless, the seals from Sardis are carved in a style that links them with heartland Achaemenid iconography "and indeed often with iconography associated with high status" (Dusinberre, 2008: 92-93). It also

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[246] A seal (Dusinberre, 2003: 159-160, fig. 59) that depicts the royal figure in heroic encounter with two winged creatures, standing astride two human headed winged bulls—found in the tomb of a large male wearing other gold ornaments, ethnicity unknown.

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seems clear that Achaemenid style seals could be used by non-Persians, and Dusinberre rightly notes the lack of ethnic associations with any particular imagery in the glyptic at Persepolis (Dusinberre, 2003:147).

We do find glyptic *connections* to the winged disk in other contexts at Sardis—especially with reference to the gold brachteates (Fig. 5.1) associated with elite garments in a number of tombs (Dusinberre, 2003: 149, fig. 55).[247] These brachteates are cast in the form of strongly Achaemenid imagery, such as bearded sphinxes, winged bulls, and the winged disk of Ahuramazda (Janfmann, 1983: 63, fig. 163). Dusinberre posits that, as the ornaments were worn on ceremonial clothing, they were part of a *koine* of style and iconography for the elite, signaling a chosen social identity (2003: 148-9). Whether Persian or not, this elite wanted to be associated, even in death, with Darius and his ruling clan. Regardless of ethnicity, this supports the view of the winged disk as—among other things—an elite power symbol. The fact that the symbol fluidly traversed from the monumental to the administrative sphere into the realm of death and the afterlife hints at its absorption into other areas of social life within the Achaemenid realm, quite apart from its acknowledged place in the administrative sphere. In fact, Dusinberre suggests that the elite differentiated themselves from other social classes with the use of a hegemonic stylistic code, regardless of their ethnicity (Dusinberre, 2003:150; cf. also Maffre, 2007: 117 ff., for an indigenous breakdown of the population of Hellespontine

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[247] Out of 79 tombs, 14% (11) included gold appliqués (Dusinberre, 2003:149). Not all tombs have been excavated at present. See also Akurgal, 1956b; Balkan, 1959. Even with this small percentage of excavated tombs, it is evident that the gold appliqués were reserved for a small number of the populace—probably the wealthy and/or powerful.

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Phrygia, which reflects a quite mixed population in the elite system of the western satrapies). What can further be suggested, is that the winged disk—although absent in the known local glyptic—had an important message of allegiance to Darius in the social realm as a whole.

5.2.2.Daskyleion

Daskyleion, situated in the Troad of northwestern Anatolia, was a city of some importance and economic wealth taken by Cyrus the Great in the mid-6th century BCE when he expanded his empire westward to the Mediterranean (Kaptan, 2002:5). Today the remains of the site include what may be a palace or at least an administrative center, excavated by Ekram Akurgal in the 1950's. Although there is little in terms of material remains to attest to the city's status during the reign of Darius I (when it was probably under the administration of the western satrapy of Lydia),[248] Daskyleion became a rather powerful satrapal center in the time of his son and successor, Xerxes, as is evidenced by texts dating to the latter's reign (Kaptan, 2002:5). Bullae found in excavations of the site date to 479/8 BCE at the earliest, and to 375 BCE at the latest (*ibid*: 27). Although the evidence in question dates to a period beginning shortly after the end of Darius' reign, the material can be included with confidence in any survey of the iconography of Darius' rule—not least since Xerxes (and even his successors) closely conformed to the artistic and architectural conventions originally introduced by Darius. One can suggest that Darius' descendents were very conscious of the usefulness of continuing the successful visual and textual innovations instituted by the great king in art, religion and politics.

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[248] Kaptan, 2001: 61-62.

As one index of the political stability at the site, there was a clear thread of administrative continuity at Daskyleion where the position of satrap became hereditary for more than one hundred years after Xerxes placed Artabazos in charge of the new satrapy of Hellespontine Phrygia (Kaptan, 2002:5). The result is a continued use of certain Achaemenid motifs in the glyptic of the satrapal city through to the time of Artaxerxes II, as evidenced by the seal designs and impressions found on the bullae. The iconography of the seal impressions represent an important semiotic link between the central Persian administration and that of the periphery — something that was also the case with reference to at least one seal from Gordion (cf. Dusinberre, 2008), a further site of significance within Anatolia (see below).

The bullae were found during the excavations conducted in the 1950's in a burned layer containing coins and pottery dating to the first quarter of the 4th century BCE (Balkan, 2001: 174-6; Kaptan, 2001: 57; and 2002: 16). The bullae were stored originally in a building whose exact function is unknown (Kaptan, 2002: 16) although Balkan suggested it might have been a palace archive (1959: 126). However, Kaptan posits it must have had an administrative function in order to contain such a large quantity of sealed papyri and other documents (evidenced by the remaining bullae). It is believed by Kaptan that the Daskyleion satrapy and region functioned administratively within a central bureaucracy in a manner very similar to that of Egypt, evidenced by the letters from Arsames, an Egyptian satrap (2002: 22). This comparison is useful in establishing how the administration may have been run from a central authority in Persia. Kaptan suggests that the documents on which the bullae were affixed (now lost to time and the elements)

recorded bureaucratic matters which were sealed by officials of the satrap, as in the case

of the Egyptian example (*ibid*). The seal designs on the bullae, she therefore theorizes,

should give clear insight into the types of motifs circulating within the uppermost

echelons of administration in the region.

Out of 406 impressions on the bullae, Kaptan has collated the fragments to produce a

corpus of 185 different seal designs (Kaptan, 2002: 13) dating from the time of Xerxes

onwards (Kaptan, 2001: 62). These bullae were originally placed for the most part on

papyrus documents. At the same time a very small number were attached to leather or

parchment, as is attested by the markings of the different fibers on the clay of the bullae

(Kaptan, 2002: 13).[249] Themes to be found in the seal designs include a variety of

subjects, including portraits, scenes of animals and nature, and even mythology (Kaptan,

2001: 62). There are a number of seals containing winged disks, such as DS14 (Fig.5.4),

or DS33 and DS34 (Kaptan, 2002: pl. 185, figs. 126, 128), demonstrating an accepted use

of the symbol in the seals used in the satrapal administration, even if not at the highest

level. A small quantity reflect actual court art found at Persepolis, with parallels attested

in the Persepolis Fortification archive (cf. Garrison, 2000: 68-9, who notes a close

resemblance between the imagery of the enthroned ruler in DS4 and PFS 22, and the

winged disk in DS4 parallels that of PFS 7). Kaptan notes the "close quotation of

monumental wall relief" in the royal name seals of Daskyleion (1996a: 259-261).

However, only a very small number reflect what has been termed the "court style"—now

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[249] Cf. also Root, 2002:xii.

more clearly defined as the "Achaemenid hegemonic style"—an important marker of Achaemenid power.[250]

Importantly, in the Daskyleion archive, there exist three royal name seals. Each of these three seals is inscribed and bears a resemblance to the Achaemenid hegemonic style (DS2, Fig. 5.2; DS3, Kaptan, 2002: 157, pl. 9; and DS4, Fig. 5.3).[251] DS2 and DS3 are inscribed in Old Persian and Babylonian and date to the reign of Xerxes; DS4 is inscribed in Old Persian and dates to Artaxerxes (Kaptan, 2001: 57-8). All three royal name seals—DS2 (symmetrical royal sphinxes), DS3 (royal hero with rampant animals) and DS4 (the seated king in audience)—resemble the court art displayed on reliefs found at Persepolis, or brick friezes from Susa. This is unusual, as few of the seals actually used at Persepolis mirror the court art specifically in this way (Kaptan, 2002:3). This makes the Daskyleion royal name seals rather experimental, in that they disseminate Persian court art into a glyptic form. The use of the symbol of the king in seated splendor below the icon of his god on what is presumed to be the top administrator's seal reflects the potency of royal art to relay inclusion into the sphere of Persian elites. It also connects

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[250] The term "court style" is used by Kaptan (2002: 2) in reference to the context of seal images from Persepolis and the style isolated by Root and Garrison (2001; cf. Balkan, 1959: pl. 33 a-d). The term "court style" has been used to refer to seal iconography that reflected royal art regardless of the style actually used (Kaptan, 2002: 2). Kaptan notes that Garrison rightly suggests that the style was created in the center of the empire at the royal court. The result was that a large number of regional workshops used the Persian artistic koine to create peripheral styles that also incorporated local variations (Kaptan, 2002: 2; cf. also Boardman, 1970; 1998, and Kaptan 1990: 16, who discusses the related "Greco-Pesian" glyptic style). Dusinberre's newly-coined term (2008: 92) "Achaemenid hegemonic style", provides improved ways to describe the style and iconography of peripheral seal types.
[251] Kaptan, 2002: 3.

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the satrap to the royal court in a more intimate manner with the inclusion of the winged disk in two of the three royal name seal designs.

Balkan posited early on that several of the royal name seals belonged to the Great King himself (1959: 126). But it has recently been suggested by Kaptan that the royal name seals were used by satrapal officials with authorization. In fact, the three seals occur in nearly half of all the bullae found (Kaptan, 2001: 58). There seems to be supportive evidence in the comparanda from Persepolis, where the royal name seals were given to the highest officials at court for their own administrative use (i.e., PFS 11, used by Parnaka, an uncle of Darius). Thus, the correlation is strong between the most powerful administrators in the periphery—at least at Daskyleion—with the most powerful members of the elite at Persepolis. Even with its variations, the visual language of power, while expressing local iconographic and stylistic dialects, was clear. The Daskyleion case makes a clear statement regarding the use of elite iconography within at least the western part of the empire. But, as Garrison (2001: 74) has stressed, the original context of these seals is unknown—a circumstance that makes any suggestions regarding the status of their owners/users "highly speculative".

5.2.3. Ancient Palestine: Judea and Samaria

The Persian Empire under Cyrus the Great took control of the region of ancient Palestine in 539 or 538 BCE. This new western possession included the regions of Samaria and Judea, and such prominent sites as Megiddo, Dor, Ashdod and Gaza (cf. Stern, 1982: vii). As in other peripheral reaches of the empire, each of these provinces was controlled by

either a local governor who had sworn allegiance to the king, or a Persian satrap. The

material we find in this region differs from that in other satrapal contexts, in that local

religious mores may have influenced the use—or rather, the disuse—of certain Persian

motifs on seals used by the local administration. Therefore, while the Persian hegemonic

style of seal iconography may have been used in Samaria and Judea beginning in the

reign of Darius, the custom of using the winged disk appears to have been abandoned in

the late 5th century BCE. This change does not appear to have been inspired by political

motives; rather, as we shall see below, it may have been occasioned as a concession to

Judaic customs of the day.

The excavated Persian-period material discovered in these regions—found either in

tombs or administrative buildings, or in one instance in a cave (at Wadi

Daliyeh)—includes both bullae which were impressed with seals or the actual seals

themselves, and various ceramics (Stern, 1982: vii). The most important material in the

present context lies in the seal imagery, and in its connections to Persian administrative

practice.

The seals and their impressions from ancient Palestine generally fall into the following

three categories: a) imported seals of either Babylonian, Achaemenian, Egyptian or

Greek type; b) local seals of "mixed" style; and c) official seals connected with the

Persian administration hailing from several sources, including sites in Judea and Samaria

(Stern, 1982: 196). Rather than re-explore all the various incidences already referred to

in great detail by Stern, 1982, the most relevant examples are reviewed below.

5.2.3.a. Group A-Imported Seals: Babylonian

The Babylonian seals of the imported group mostly depict traditional Babylonian scene of priests worshipping before an altar on which are set the spear and stylus of Marduk, or on occasion the crescent moon and sun either individually or in context with other imagery (Stern, 1982: 196). Although these seals do not contain either Persian stylistic tropes or motifs, it is worth noting the use of the Babylonian sun disk in the seals, which historically has no connection to the symbol of Ahuramazda (see chapter 3). As not all sun disks or winged disks are equal in the sense of representation, it should be noted that it is possible that this use of the symbol may have traveled to ancient Palestine through other sources than the Achaemenid iconographic program. Egypt is one possible source; Babylon another, as evinced by these seals.

5.2.3.b. Group A-Imported Seals: Achaemenian

Most seal impressions in this group were stamped on bullae, each of which had probably been used to seal rolled-up papyri, such as the 128 found in a cave at Wadi Daliyeh (Stern, 1982:197. Cf also Leith, 1997). Stern notes rightly that here, as in the case of all excavated Persian-period corpora, the Achaemenian seal type (i.e. seals or impressions characterized by the Achaemenid hegemonic style) formed only a small part of the available corpus (Stern, 1982:197).

Strikingly, with the exception of several examples from the Wadi Daliyeh, only three other seal impressions in a pure Achaemenian style (such as reflects the design and style of Persepolis seals in contrast to more local interpretations) have been discovered in the

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region of ancient Palestine (Stern, 1982:197). All three consist of impressions from stamp seals. This circumstance is not so surprising, however, since the cylinder appears to have been chiefly revived in Persia itself in order to seal clay tablets. It remains scarce in peripheral areas where the norm in administration seems to have been to use papyrus scrolls. One single example of an Achaemenian cylinder seal was found at Tel el-Heir in the northern Sinai, excavated in a military fortress of Persian date. It depicts the Persian "royal hero" in combat with two winged lions (cf. Stern, 1982: 198). There is no winged disk in the scene.

Two of the three Achaemenian-type stamp seals originate from Samaria, and have artistic parallels with those from the hoard at Wadi Daliyeh (Stern, 1982:197). One of them depicts what Stern identifies as the "king of Persia" in heroic combat with a winged griffin (Stern, 1982:197). The second seal more or less depicts the same motif, except that the griffin is placed on a pedestal creature, and above the scene is a winged disk (*ibid*). The third seal is from Shechem (Fig. 5.5), and portrays the king as hunter shooting an arrow. Behind him appears the winged sun disk which may, or may not, represent the Persian form of the icon. Note especially the unusual form of the winged disk, one not generally found in seals emanating from the fortification archive.

5.2.3.c. Group A-Imported Seals: Egyptian and Greek

Both Egyptian and Greek seals have been identified at a number of the sites covered by Stern. The Egyptian seals, which date to the 26th-29th dynasties, are rendered in conventional Egyptian scarab style and Stern posits that they must be interpreted as

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Egyptian imports (1982:198). Greek seals in the form of oval gems depict typical Greek themes, and were located in contexts at sites such as Ramet Rahel, Shiqmona and Jaffa and date to the close of the Persian period (*ibid*). No iconographic symbols of Persian rule (either the winged disk or the Persian hero) appear in this section of the corpus. The lack of the winged disk in seals from Memphis (see below) also conforms to the lack of this same symbol in the Egyptian seals found in Palestine.

5.2.3.d. Group B--Local Seals and Impressions

Both inscribed and uninscribed (anepigraphic) local seals are attested in ancient Palestine during the Persian period. Anepigraphic seals have been found in strata and tombs dating to the Persian period; they contain both "Persian" and "Greek" motifs, as well a variety of motifs which cannot be defined and which are depicted in mixed styles. Stern posits that these are local creations imitating Phoenician, Greek, Achaemenid, Babylonian and Egyptian seals (1982: 199). Among the local seals are those cut as scaraboid seals, which may sometimes echo an earlier Iron-Age style; conical seals (such as Babylonian style seals); oval stamp seals which mimic those of Greek origin; and those shaped as Egyptian type scarab seals (*ibid*).

Of special interest is a scaraboid agate seal mentioned by Stern, which was found in tomb 2 of the Philistine tombs at Gezer (1982: 199). This seal depicts the crowned hero, possibly standing on a pedestal creature, struggling with two demons in heroic combat. Above the hero floats the winged icon of Ahuramazda. Another local seal of note is a conical seal (from tomb 4 of the Philistine tombs at Gezer) which shows the figure of a

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priest with his hands raised in worship, standing before a sphinx and half crescent (*ibid*). Above hovers a winged disk, which may in this case represent Ahuramazda, or may perhaps represent a Babylonian stylistic trope. In this non-Persian context, it is difficult to be certain.

A number of oval seals are engraved with what Stern identifies as "Achaemenian" motifs. Such seals are posited to be Phoenician products. One example Stern describes is a signet ring with an Egyptian style scarab found at 'Atlit (1982: 199). It depicts the figure of a standing bearded man, dressed in a long tunic, which Stern takes to be a possible representation of the Persian king. However, the figure is not depicted in the Achaemenid hegemonic style, nor are there discernably Persian features in his dress, so he may equally well be representative of another ethnicity. There is no winged disk in the design.

The Scarab seals carry no distinctly Persian iconography, and tend to display mixed Egyptian, Greek, and "Phoenician" influences (Stern, 1982: 200). Nevertheless, an interesting play on a very Persian theme is the figure of Heracles, who, on one seal is depicted in Achaemenian style, kneeling with bow in hand in a pose reminiscent of the kneeling, running king in certain Persian darics and sigloi.[252] In this case it is imperial coinage as opposed to royal monumental art or glyptic imagery that seems to be reflected in the seal in question.[253]

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[252] See Stern, 1982: 200 with fig. 325; cf. also Carradice, 1987; and Stronach, 1989.
[253] This is perhaps particularly interesting, as there is a notable absence of the winged disk in all imperial Achaemenid coinage. Satrapal examples, which represent 'delegated' coinage, are void of this theme. Cf. Hill, 1899: 95. Only one coin, ascribed to and minted

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5.2.3.e. Group C—Official Seals of the Administration

In the administrative regions of Judea and Samaria, both inscribed and anepigraphic seals are represented in the Persian-period administrative material (Stern, 1982: 202). Curiously, inscribed seals appear to have been less popular in the Persian period than during the latter part of the Iron Age (*ibid*: 200).

Seal impressions with Persian motifs can be associated with officials of the Persian administration in the province of Judea from the end of the 6th century BCE to the end of the 5th century BCE (Stern, 1982: 213). But although the Judeans had long known seals with images (Leith, 1997: 24-25), the administrative reform that took place at the end of the 5th century BCE spelled the end of such Persian motifs. Subsequent local seal types had undecorated stamps, simply engraved with the name of the province in Aramaic, and with the occasional addition of a schematic symbol, but nothing reminiscent of the seals of earlier Persian rule. Stern posits that this was a direct result of the above-mentioned administrative reform (Stern, 1982: 213; 236).

The Wadi Daliyeh bullae, dating to the 4th century BCE, consist of 128 clay sealings found by Bedouins in the Mugharet Abu Shinjeh cave in the ancient province of Samaria. They were purchased by Frank Cross in 1962.[254] Originally, the sealings were affixed to papyrus legal documents (Leith, 1997: intro), which had been written in Aramaic, and apparently sealed in the capital city of the province of Samaria. As these documents had

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by the Persian satrap Datames and dated to the late Achemenid period (378-372 BCE), includes the motif. See Jenkins, 1990: 80, fig. 218.

[254] See P. Lapp, "An account of the discovery," *DWD*, 1: xxxx.

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no archaeological context, it was only the 1963 excavations of P. Lapp that yielded clear proof of their origin and context (*ibid*). At Wadi Daliyeh, 3 separate categories of seal are represented in the impressions on the bullae: 1) seals with Hebrew script which mention the names of the governors of Samaria; 2) seals of Achaemenian style in a stamp form; and 3) stamp seals of Athenian-Greek type (Stern, 1982:197).

The Wadi Daliyeh seal iconography can be divided into two basic groups: designs with the Persian Hero, and designs which solely depict animals. Although the Achaemenid hegemonic style seems to be represented in the corpus (e.g. WD4 in Leith, 1997: 214-217; and pl. XVIII), there are no winged disks. Additionally, there are many Greek motifs. It appears that the seals reflect normal usage, at least among the upper class in Samaria, in the 4th century BCE. (Leith, 1997: 32). This is an interesting contrast to the seals from Judea. Leith notes that the onomastic evidence from the Samaria Papyri suggests that many of the Samarian patricians may have worshipped YHWH, the god of ancient Israel. She posits that the Samarians may have consciously rejected some of the more common Persian, Greek and Phoenician images (Leith, 1997: 25). She further concludes that some imagery "conflicted with their Yahwism and/or national identity" (*ibid*). Leith specifically notes that even on the Persian court style seal designs, none carry the image of the winged disk, or even a variant, that could be associated with Ahuramazda (*ibid*). She rightly questions the utility of the symbol in the region of Samaria. This could also sustain Stern's suggestion regarding the 5th century reform in Judea—and the decline of Persian images in the seals. While the Achaemenid hegemonic

style carried power in the region, the winged disk—quite rare, as in other areas of the periphery—would seem to have been of particularly limited local relevance.

5.2.4. Memphis

The Egyptian city of Memphis, an administrative center during the Old and New Kingdoms, and major industrial city, was an important satrapal seat.[255] Excavated by Petrie from 1908-1913, the royal palace of Apries (regnal dates 589-570 BCE) was located towards the north end of the city. Here Petrie discovered, among other objects (which include a cartouche with the beginnings of the name "Cambyses", and a document dating to the reign of Artaxerxes II (cf. Petrie, 1909: 11), a number of clay jar covers, including one depicting a Persian king fighting a winged beast (*ibid*: 12).

At the west end of the palace fosse, on the south side, under a layer of rubble, Petrie located dozens of clay sealings which had fallen from an administrative structure (*ibid*: 41). The sealings had originally been affixed to parcels instead of papyri, and many date to the 5th century BCE Persian occupation (*ibid*). The objects found with the seals appear to be luxury objects, such as an ivory eye for a bull's head, glazed ceramics and beads; and some armour and blades (*ibid*). The labels found associated with the seals and objects were written in Aramaic on split slips of wood (Petrie, *ibid*: 41). These labels constitute further evidence of the Persian administrative presence in Egypt, absorbed deeply enough

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[255] Cf. Briant, 1996, for a thorough and detailed examination of the different satrapal regions and their place in the Persian administration.

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into the Memphis administration to include documents in Aramaic, the *lingua franca* of the empire, as well as seals in the hegemonic style.

The seals from the Egyptian satrapal center at Memphis reflect much the same situation as that noted in other administrative centers in adjacent parts of the empire. There existed at the city a variety of seal types, including Egyptian, Greek and Achaemenian (Stern, 1982: 197). The Persian seals depict for the most part heroic combat, with one seal (#30) depicting the Persian king. Another seal, #46, is described by Petrie as containing a winged female in greek style; however, it appears to be a Persian Hero, and there may be evidence of a hovering winged disk above, cut in bold lines without much remaining detail. The impression is incomplete, and it is difficult to ascertain its true and complete design. The seal also hailed from the palace and may have belonged to an administrator. If this is the case, we have only one (unconfirmed) instance where the winged disk is used in the context of the Persian hegemonic style at Memphis, and potentially by a high-ranking Persian administrator in Egypt.

One seal that contains a solar disk is associated by Petrie with the Hittite symbol (Petrie, 1910: 42). Indeed, it does not seem to reflect the Persian hegemonic style, and shows several figures with outstretched hands held over a kid or a small goat before a seated king holding a whip. Another seal, #43, which Petrie suggests possibly dates to Darius (*ibid*: 43) is also inscribed with Egyptian hieroglyphs and does not contain Persian motifs. Thus, at Memphis we have the curious case where the solar disk, prevalent in Egyptian art, is not to be found in the context of Persian seals outside of one possible

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instance (seal #46). The only semiotic link in Egypt with the Persian administration is with the use of the Achaemenid hegemonic style, reinforcing generally what has been seen in the aforementioned satrapal contexts—in the periphery, it is not the winged disk which associates the user with Achaemenid rule and the Persian elite; it is the Achaemenid hegemonic style. This is the case in both monumental art and portable, glyptic art. As noted by Aston (1999: 18), "Persian art had little effect on native artistic traditions" in Egypt.

5.3. Case Study II: Seals of Economic Contexts—Nippur and Gordion

5.3.1. The Murashu Archive, Nippur

The Murashu firm was based in Nippur, an important Mesopotamian city that had begun to enjoy revived importance in the course of the first millennium BC as a transit point between Babylonia and Susa (Stolper, 1985: 24). Its archive is the largest source for Achaemenid seal impressions hailing from Babylonia, dating to the period from 454-404 BCE, i.e. from the reigns of Artaxerxes I to that of Artaxerxes II (Stolper, 1985: 23). Aside from this archive being slightly idiosyncratic for this particular study, it is also from a very different context than that of the PF or PT seals, or those from the satrapal centers. While the seals and impressions from the various satrapies are to be considered within the sphere of royal administration, the Murashu archive is from a private context, although it, too, conducted transactions related to the royal family. Notwithstanding the slightly anachronistic dating to the period just post-Darius, this archive can be useful to reflect something of the longevity of the codified artistic program instigated by Darius and carried forward with aplomb by his son Xerxes and his descendents.

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Other comparanda exists from Babylonia, but they do not reflect the Persian seal types introduced by Darius. For example, the reigns of Cyrus and Cambyses are represented by 16 known tablets with 20 seal impressions from Babylonia (Zettler, 1979: 258). These seal impressions are typically neo-Babylonian, with a figure in profile facing a divine emblem or altar (*ibid*: 258). From the reign of Darius, there are an additional 14 tablets and 24 seal impressions, with a small number (4) dating from his 4th to his 17th regnal year that also reflect Neo-Babylonian seal designs (*ibid*).[256] The other type of seal style found on the Darius tablets from various Babylonian proveniences (some from Nippur) parallel what is found in the Murashu archive of Nippur and depict horsemen, rampant animals and even one described by Zettler as depicting a standing figure "very Greek in character" (*ibid*: 260).

In the Murashu archive we see a dramatic shift in seal style and iconography, as the Neo-Babylonian style seal type found in the other Achaemenid period tablets gives way to the Achaemenid hegemonic style (Zettler, 1979: 260). Menant[257] noted that the Neo-Babylonian seal type of human figure before an altar was discontinued during the reign of Darius and replaced by Persian or Achaemenid seal types (*ibid*: 257), which were already present in Persia, but not in Babylon. However, once the shift occurred, seal types that replaced the Neo-Babylonian types had parallels in the Persepolis Treasury tablets.

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[256] See Table 1, Zettler, 1979: 259, for a complete listing of tablet dates and publication citations.
[257] Menant, 1878: 17-18, in Zettler, 1979: 257.

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In fact, the later seals reflect something of the Persian hegemonic style. A fine example is Philadelphia 910 (Fig. 5.6; Zettler, 1979: 261, fig. 3a), which depicts the Persian ruler in heroic encounter with a single animal, and a winged disk above. There are at least 4 similar types of examples (e.g., Philadelphia 951, 952, 949, 955). Several depict a royal figure in heroic combat with the winged disk above (Philadelphia 949, in Zettler, 1979: 260). Another seal, Philadelphia 955 (Fig. 5.7), depicts heraldic rampant horses flanking an encircled bust of a human or god, and above is a winged disk (Zettler, 1979:261; and fig. 10, pp. 265). Interestingly, "cultic scenes" seem to be Babylonian as opposed to Persian in style and iconography (Zettler, 1979: 261); although a number of the cultic scenes belong to the Achaemenid visual koine (e.g., Fig. 5.8, depicting affronted sphinxes flanking what appears to be a stylized tree; and a winged disk floating above). There are no examples of royal name seals at Murashu. However, there are many heroic encounter scenes. This is in contrast to the situation at Persepolis, where, as Zettler notes, only heroic encounter scenes are royal name seals (Zettler, 1979: 263). Apparently, the heroic encounter did not signify an elite or royal status, only inclusion into the Achaemenid visual discourse and cultural milieu.

Zettler rightly questions if the change in seal types can be associated with the change in administration under Darius I (Zettler, 1979: 269). Darius broke up the satrapies of Cyrus and Cambyses into smaller administrative units (i.e., Babylonia was split into 2 districts).[258] Zettler posits this kind of reorganization would have a centralizing tendency on the administration of the empire, and suggests this is reflected in the seal types in the

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[258] Weisehofer, 2001: 60-63.

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Murashu archive, which changes from a general Neo-Babylonian character to an Achaemenid character in style and iconography (Zettler, 1979: 269). Indeed, as posited by Stolper (1985: 153), the Murashu texts express exactly this centralizing tendency, and the "distinctive system of military and manorial tenure tied to the means of political control". Furthermore, the seal impressions reflect the glyptic of persons of high social or political rank as the firm managed land for the aristocracy (*ibid*).

The use of the winged disk in some of these seals is interesting in so far as the context of the archive is largely outside the royal administrative sphere, but note that royal personages are mentioned as landholders (Stolper, 1985: 26), and that this family firm managed royal properties and canals as well (*ibid*: 36-37).[259] Since the Persian hegemonic style in other contexts seems to have been a marker of elite status, we may assume that the same conditions applied here. The winged disk is more difficult to understand. It may have been marking either ethnic or religious affiliation here as well, but the examples and contexts yield too little information to posit such an identification.

5.3.2. Seals of Gordion

The site of Gordion, the ancient capital of Phrygia, still carries associations with its most famous ruler, Midas. It had a continuous history of settlement ranging from the Early Bronze Age to Roman times. Overlooking a major east-west land route, the city regularly enjoyed far-flung commercial ties—ties that ensured the long-term vitality of the site

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[259] Texts in the Murashu archives repeatedly name the royal house (bit sharri) as the recipient of *ilku* paid on bow fiefs or family-held property (Tuplin, 1987: 129).

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(Dusinberre, 2005: 3). During the Achaemenid period Gordion appears to have been an economically important and prosperous city, although it did not enjoy the status of a satrapal seat (Dusinberre, 2008: 90). Nevertheless, it contained an elite residence and some of the material at the site, as noted by Dusinberre, "replicated at least some of the status markers of the Persian high court" (*ibid*). The site includes a citadel mound and upper city, a lower town and an outer town.

In the 1950's, excavations were conducted at Gordion by Rodney Young from the University of Pennsylvania. He discovered the "late Phrygian levels", which equate in date with the Achaemenid Persian period. In the palace area on the east mound, moreover, Young located several elite structures, including the Mosaic Building and the Painted House (cf. Glendinning, 1996: 23).

During the Persian/Late Phrygian period, there was an increase in cultural interaction in the area and seals began to be used more abundantly than in prior periods (Dusinberre, 2005: 24). Also, since the seals were fashioned from varied materials including glass, Dusinberre (2005: 24) posits that the Achaemenid presence led to a lively exchange of products. A not immodest number of 29 seals and impressions can be ascribed to the Persian period, even if most were found in later, Hellenistic levels (Young, 1953: 141). In seeking to account for this circumstance, Dusinberre suggests that the Persian period tombs at Gordion may have been looted of their seals in Hellenistic times (2005: 24).

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Seal imagery at Gordion changes in character with the advent of the Persian period. In fact, Dusinberre suggests a direct link between the change in the nature of seals and the change of administration at Gordion (2008: 88). As demonstrated by the Murashu archive at Nippur, Achaemenid iconography was not restricted to the administrative centers and was absorbed into the daily lives of even those at less strategic, non-satrapal cities (Dusinberre, 2005: 114). While earlier seal designs at Gordion were non-descript in appearance, the Achaemenid period imagery is quite varied. A small number of seals parallel or mirror those of the central administration. Two are of particular interest to this study.

Seal 199 (Fig. 5.9) depicts a chariot hunt scene with fleeing or fighting animals and a winged disk overhead. Dusinberre (2005: 25) suggests it may be a hybrid product that displays Phrygian style and Achaemenid imagery. It might also be observed that the chariot theme conceivably hearkens back to Assyria. Indeed, the seal is of special interest in that it demonstrates the embrace of new symbols of power, while retaining certain older traditions of the Phrygian artistic *koine*. In this way, the user presumably chose to signal inclusion in both Phrygian and Achaemenid society.

Seal #100 (Fig. 5.10), is by far the most intriguing seal from Gordion in that it exhibits direct iconographic links with the artistic repertoire of Persepolis. Seal 100 was recovered from the limits of the Achaemenid period structure dubbed the "Mosaic Building" on the Citadel Mound at Gordion (Young, 1953: 11-14; Dusinberre, 2008: 88-89). The building was dated by Young to the end of the 5th or the beginning of the 4th century BCE

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(Glendinning, 1996: 23-25), but Glendinning notes that the seal was probably carved in the 5th century BCE. The building was presumed by Young to be the official residence of a "Great King at Gordion" (Young, 1953: 14). Unfortunately, the seal was found in a later, disturbed context, and therefore Dusinberre, while upholding the seal's likely contemporaneity with the Mosaic Building, is perfectly correct to point out that the seal's true date does not derive from its stratigraphic context (2008: 89).

The seal is the only inscribed seal found at Gordion from this period (Young, 1953: 141). It depicts what Dusinberre (2008: 93) describes as "heartland Achaemenid religious and kingly iconography" and it is carved in the Achaemenid hegemonic style. Notably, Dusinberre (2008: 93) suggests that the use of the Achaemenid hegemonic style denotes a semiotic link between the various elites at the ruling centers, such as Sardis and Daskyleion, with those at lesser centers of power, such as Gordion. This seal, reflecting much the same type of imagery found at Persepolis, may represent, according to Dusinberre, the presence of ethnic Persians (2005: 26). However, we must be cautious about attributing specific iconography with ethnic affiliation, especially in the peripheral areas of the empire. As clearly demonstrated by the material at Sardis, one need not have been Persian to enjoy the benefits of the markers of Persian political identity.

The cylinder is of carved agate and is engraved with a design very similar to those found at Persepolis in the fortification archive. Dusinberre (2008: 94) has remarked on the similarity of this seal to PFS 11 (cf. Garrison, 2000: fig. 18). The design includes a

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winged disk with an emerging human bust hovering above a fire altar.[260] Below is a

circle within which a deity or royal figure holds a lotus blossom. Two crowned (royal?)

figures, each holding a lotus, stand on pedestal sphinxes and flank the central figure. An

Aramaic inscription is carved in the terminal field.[261]

Dusinberre posits that the imagery of the seal "makes a unified an powerful claim for the

benefit of Achaemenid rule" (2008: 98). Indeed, it is evident that the seal user was either

a very important member of the local elite, or wanted to be viewed as such. Whether the

owner was Persian or not is unanswerable (even a Persian name may not necessarily

reflect a Persian ethnicity, given the intermingling of populations, and other factors[262]).

However, the user of the seal probably sought to give a message stronger than that of

ethnicity alone; namely, one of alliance with the Achaemenid rulers.

Miller-Collett and Root (1997: 355) have analyzed a stamp seal found at Troy (Fig. 5. 11)

of Achaemenid date, but probably reworked in Roman times. It depicts on its base a

solitary representation of Ahuramazda, similar to stamp seal impressions found on the PF

tablets, and a bird on the side of the seal, added at a later date (*ibid*: 356). They remark

that "it stands to reason that for the clearest manifestations of Persian influence in the

western empire we should look to the centers of control, the satrapal seats at Daskyleion

and Sardis. Outside of satrapal centers the situation is harder to assess. The Persians will

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[260] Compare also the same motif in both Darius' monumental rock reliefs at Bisotun and
Naqsh-i Rustam.
[261] Dusinberre's article (2008: 92) contains a translation by Charles E. Jones.
[262] Cf. Henkelman, 2003: 227-228.

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have scarcely attempted to override local customs and cultural patterns outside the immediate environs of their own enclaves" (*ibid*: 357).

However, seal 100 from Gordion, hailing from a non-satrapal, economic context belies this suggestion; especially when we note the evident lack of the symbol on the glyptic at the satrapal cities such as Memphis and Sardis. Far from "over-riding" the local styles and customs, the Persian hegemonic style and its iconography were potent symbols of an elite stratum of society, as well as for those who may not have wielded political power, but either acquired royal favor or yearned simply for recognition as part of the upper-class of the empire.

5.4. Case Study III: A Temple Context—The Sippar Archive

During the late Babylonian and early Achaemenid periods—i.e. from the reign of Nabonidis down to that of Xerxes—the Babylonian city of Sippar was characterized by an active temple administration housed in the temple complex of Ebabbara. Notice of the temple's existence first emerged following Hormuz Rassam's discovery in 1881-2, of numerous clay tablets (letter orders) directly dealing with the temple's economic transactions (MacGinnis, 1995: 15). Regardless of the lack of state archives for Babylonia during the Achaemenid period, economic archives from the private Murashu and Egibi archives, and temple archives from Eanna and Ebabbara (MacGinnis, 1995:2), each reflect something of the trickle down effects of imperial rule in places not directly

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controlled by the king's administration.[263] Beyond this, the tablet archive hailing from Sippar offers precious clues concerning the frequency with which certain numinous Achaemenid symbols, such as the winged disk, could be used in a religious setting in Babylonia in the interval in question.

Of the more than 30,000 tablets found at Sippar during the excavations of Rassam and W.E. Budge (MacGinnis, 1995:13), 287 correlate to the period between year 28 of Nebuchadnezzar and year 2 of Xerxes (*ibid*: 15). They comprise a series of letter orders, issued by officials connected with the temple, that deal with the provisions of grain, dates and oil. The texts are identified as letter orders by the presence of the words "send" or "give" (*ibid*: 16). While most of the foodstuffs were destined for temple officers and workers, certain payments were also made to agents of the crown for the "king's share" of the temple stores (Tuplin, 1987: 129). Two distinct phases in the corpus of tablets have been discerned by MacGinnis: Phase A concerns orders issued between year 2 of Nabonidus and year 4 of Cambyses; and Phase B concerns texts from year 6 of Cambyses and year 2 of Xerxes (1995: 16). Temple income was procured from taxes and tithes, free-will offerings, land rents, loaning commodities, agriculture, livestock farming, sale of produce and manufacture of textiles (*ibid*: 7). Temple staff consisted of administrators, priests, food preparers, craftsmen and temple slaves (*ibid*: 8-9).

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[263] MacGinnis speculates that the absence of state archives under Persian rule could be due to the switch from the use of cuneiform on clay tablets to Aramaic on parchment or leather (1995: 2).

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The tablets of Phase B, which of course cover the entire reign of Darius, are more detailed than those of the previous period, and it appears that sealing occured more frequently during this phase (MacGinnis, 1995:18). In Phase A, MacGinnis notes that the names of the letter writers are rarely given; and even when they are, the author's rank is not noted. However, he suggests they were most often scribes (*ibid*). In Phase B, most letter writers are again scribes, although a *sangu* (a higher ranking administrator) could also issue orders of this kind. The recipients of most of the texts of Phase B are listed (in order of frequency) as master of the rent of Shamash, master of the rent of the great gate, tithe officials, canal inspectors, an official in charge of fields and a shepherd in one instance (MacGinnis, 1995:19). As one can note from this list, recipients of the payments mentioned in the letter orders span all ranks of the temple hierarchy—from highly placed officials to laborers.

Administratively, the letter orders fall into the categories of either a) letters sent to officials within the Ebabbara or Temple Complex, or b) letters sent from Ebabbara officials to recipients elsewhere (MacGinnis, 1995: 19). The officials noted in the texts included the *sangu*, or chief administrator of the temple and overseer of accounts; the *Qipu*, who was in direct contact with the king and represented his interests in the temple; the *Res Sharri*, an administrator who may have held a military office; the *Tupsharru*, or scribes; and the *Sepiru*, a figure with no clear title who conducted business for either the *Qipu* or the king (*ibid*: 114-122).

MacGinnis poses a very pertinent question when he asks if a correlation can be made between the temple office and the iconography of the seal holder (1995:170). Although only representative of a small corpus, the seal impressions do suggest that the seal of a *sangu* (temple administrator) normally showed the scene of a worshipper standing before a divine symbol. On the other hand, the seal of the *gipu* (royal appointee) tended to be a contest scene (*ibid*).[264] But how the winged disk fits into this picture is less than clear.

While most of the seals dating to Darius' reign (phase B) have typical Neo-Babylonian designs (e.g., worshippers standing before Babylonian symbols of divinity), three seals are of particular relevance to this study and are discussed below.

Seal B.12 (Fig.5.12) depicts a worshipper before a floating crescent with emerging figure. This seal was owned and used by Bel-iddin (MacGinnis, 1995: 165) who was *tupsharru* (scribe) during the reign of Darius (*ibid*: 104). There is nothing particular about his position as a temple scribe to warrant a semiotic association with the Achaemenid elite, other than the general status given to a scribe. While the scene may suggest a reference to the Achaemenid visual program, MacGinnis (1995:172) notes that this image is not uncommon in the neo-Babylonian seals, and is found on some seals from Uruk.[265] He posits that the moon may represent a boat in the Neo-Babylonian context. Therefore, the seal may or may not be making a visual reference to the ruling power. The fact that there

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[264] It will be of interest to see how this compares with the situation at Persepolis, once the remaining Garrison & Root volumes on the PF seal impressions are published.
[265] Delaporte, 1910, no. 608, 609; 1920, vol.I pl. 54 nos. 14,15; vol.II pl. 92, nos. 1, 8, 26, 39, 43. Collon, 1987: nos. 771, 884, 895.

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is no clear visual reference to the Achaemenid hegemonic style, however, limits the usefulness of the image.

Seal C.6 (MacGinnis, 1995: 165) depicts a very typical Persian heroic encounter. It was owned/used by a certain Balatu, who was also a *tupsharru* (*ibid*: 103). Balatu, as the user of Seal C.6, also had nothing discernibly unusual about his position as scribe (like Bel-iddin, the owner of Seal B.12) to warrant a clear semiotic connection to the Achaemenid aristocracy. Nor was he, presumably, a Persian. Even as a temple scribe, however, his seal reflects a semiotic link with the ruling elite. This perhaps comments more on the status given to scribes overall, as opposed to a cultural affilitation.

Seal D.1 (Fig. 5.13) shows two atlas figures flanking a sacred tree of some kind; they hold up a winged form. The owner/user was named Liblut (MacGinnis, 1995:165), and, apart from being a *tupsharru* or scribe, he was also the *mar sipri* (messenger or envoy) of the *Qipu* (*ibid*: 118). Let us recall that the *Qipu* was the administrator who looked after the king's interests at the temple. Accordingly, Liblut must have had dealings with elite members of the Persian administration. There is, then, a correlation between the king, his administrator and messenger, and the symbol of the winged disk. MacGinnis (1995:174) notes that scenes with a large winged disk spreading over the top of the seal with atlas figures and a plant beneath are common in Neo-Babylonian glyptic. Nevertheless, it is somewhat intriguing that the symbol of the winged disk—in its pan-Babylonian and Persian form—should also have an apparent link to the royal administration in this temple context.

It is unclear what type of seal the actual *Qipu* (Ina-sil-sarri) (MacGinnis, 1995: 131) used, in as much as there is no concordance between the tablets, the seal impressions and his name. But since the only two seals with conceivable Achaemenid features in the corpus are known to have had other owners, he very possibly retained a seal with Neo-Babylonian motifs. Of course, it is possible—but improbable—that we do not have a sample of the *Qipu's* seal in the corpus. MacGinnis suggests that the *Qipu* held seals of "master of animals" motifs, such as Sarru-ludari (seal C.4), who also held office during Darius' reign (1995:170). He notes that the motif "has already been recognized as a mark of the Achaemenid Imperial Secretariat" in areas such as Persepolis,[266] Memphis[267] and Daskyleion[268] (1995:170-171). This would be the logical assumption, however we have no material evidence to verify if this was indeed the case. The Sippar temple context does not reflect a wholesale promotion of the Achaemenid hegemonic style, nor of the winged disk. This could be due to the private economic character of the temple archive, which had little to do with the central Persian administration other than making payments to the royal storehouse for goods that were required; or perhaps the lack of elites in such a context explains the lacuna.

Perhaps there is one more explanation to consider. It is useful to place the temple at Sippar in a historical context. Babylonian temples were awarded a continued special protection and cancellation of the obligatory payment of tithes to the government under the reign of Cyrus the Great when he took Babylon in 539 BCE, and they enjoyed

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[266] Schmidt, 1957: 7.

[267] Petrie, 1910: pl.35-36, nos. 25-32.

[268] Kaptan, 2002; Balkan, 1959: 125-6.

economic growth and stability during this period (MacGinnis, 1995:2-6). This policy was subsequently reversed in the reign of Cambyses (*ibid*: 6-7); and under Darius the region of Babylonia was split into several separate divisions, effectively to tighten central control over an economically valuable area. These restrictions (both economic and geographic) may have affected the politics of the temple administration, and how the royal iconography did or did not find a receptive audience.

While the Murashu archive offers a window onto the dealings of private economic transactions in one of the peripheral areas of the empire, revealing a near unanimous adoption of the Achaemenid hegemonic style in seal iconography in Babylonia over a period of several decades, the temple archive from Sippar demonstrates that not all contexts in Babylonia facilitated the absorption of Achaemenid iconography—or the Achaemenid hegemonic style—in the glyptic sphere. This may have been the result of a conscious non-assimilation on the part of the temple administrators, whose initial preferential treatment under Persian rule came to an end at some point during the reign of Cambyses.

5.5. Case Study IV: Seals of a Funerary Context—Ur

Excavated Achaemenid tombs are relatively few in number. We have previously mentioned one burial context in this study: the tombs at Sardis, with the distinctive gold brachteates. This funerary context contained depictions of Ahuramazda, i.e. of the winged disk, in the form of physical adornment in precious metal (gold). These items were certainly meant to convey elite status, and possibly also an ethnic or religious

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affiliation. More probably, in their peripheral context, they represented allegiance to the king and inclusion into the top level of the social hierarchy.

From Ur, in southern Mesopotamia, there are other excavated graves of Achaemenid date, including one from what may have been the burial of a seal engraver (Collon, 1993: 73). This non-elite burial from a peripheral context of the empire is interesting, in that it contained a hoard of seal impressions of many different types. These seal impressions show that there was a demand from clients in the region of southern Mesopotamia for the Achaemenid hegemonic style and the use of the winged disk in seal iconography, as well as an interest in other diverse types of designs and motifs. This reflects much of what is found in the other varied contexts of seals we have been examining, from satrapal cities to areas noted for trade and industry. In other words, this motley collection of seal impressions reflects rather well the actual state of affairs regarding glyptic in the empire during Achaemenid rule.

It was in 1932 that Sir Leonard Woolley excavated the Persian period grave in question.[269] The grave, located in the "PJ" pit outside the royal cemetery at Ur, had been plundered (LeGrain: 1951: viii), but it proved to still possess a clay coffin and no less than 200 bullae (Collon, 1993: 65). The burial was found near the northwest wall of the ziggurat terrace in a trench facing towards the inner face of the town wall. Collon notes that clay coffins of this type were used until the 4th century BCE, and were essentially

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[269] The seal impressions and bullae were originally published in *Antiquaries Journal*, vol. Xii, no. 4, p. 389 (Oct. 1932).

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based on a bronze coffin type that dates back to at least the 7th century BCE. The bullae found in the coffin measure about 1-2 cm in diamteter, and are for the most part pinched, with clear impressions of the thumb and the first two fingers that had served to press the clay onto the surface of the seal. A coin impression found in the hoard gives a terminus post-quem of 465-460 BC (Collon 1993: 66).

The seal designs that are represented in the hoard range from earlier Assyrian and Babylonian compositions, to Egyptianizing representations of the god Bes, to images of human heads, lions, horses, reptiles, birds, and *mischweisen* (including winged bulls, lion -griffins, and Achaemenid sphinxes flanking an incense burner). Also present were impressions of gems and rings of Greek or Ionian manufacture or style (Collon, 1993:68) as well as impressions of Achamenid rings with leaf shaped bezels tending to depict heroic encounters (*ibid*: 5). Because of the inaccuracy (or lack of care) with which the seals were stamped or rolled (sometimes only part of the design is rolled out, and at times a cylinder is pressed into clay as a stamp, making it difficult to distinguish between cylinder or stamp seals), the chronology of the seals is somewhat confusing. However, Collon posits approximate dates from the 8th to the 5th centuries BCE for the Assyrian and Babylonian seals (1993: 68).

Some seal designs depict a mixture of styles, such as WA1932-10-8, 304 (Collon, 1993: pl. 11). In this impression, a bearded, kilted figure holds 2 small lions under his arms. The design is essentially Neo-Babylonian but, as Collon notes, the heads of the lions are Achaemenid in style and appearance. It is a type of hybrid Babylonian-Persian design.

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Another seal design, impressed on a clay tag, WA 1932-10-8, 196 (*ibid*), depicts a Babylonian priest facing right. Before him is placed an incense burner, and facing him is a bearded sphinx beneath a winged disk and crescent. Although identified as Neo-Babylonian, the use of sphinxes and the winged disk in this image reference Achaemenid monumental imagery—and can be compared, not least, to certain Susian brick friezes (see Harper et al, 1992:229, fig. 157).

The impressions of Achaemenid cylinder seals date to the 5th century BCE and depict the typical iconography found in Persian hegemonic seals (Collon, 1993: 69). Impression WA 1932-10-8, 330, 217, 344 (*ibid*: pl. 11), depicts a figure in a hood and draped skirt with a weapon on his back and a bowcase at his waist. He grasps the forelock of his horse; and the horse-and-rider stand below a winged disk. It is compelling that this very Persian equestrian theme, one that figures even in the inscriptions of Darius at Naqsh-i Rustam, is apparent here in conjunction with the very symbol of the god of the Persians. Another seal impression published by Legrain (1951: pl. 40, fig. 759)(Fig. 5.14), depicts two Persians hunting lions—one with a bow and arrow, another with a spear. Above the scene hovers an abbreviated winged disk.

Collon suggests that the stamp seals were made for, and belonged to, private individuals, and that the (so-called) seal engraver apparently enjoyed collecting a wide variety of impressions from seals (Collon, 1987: 90). As comparanda, this corpus is quite useful, as we get a glimpse into the very varied seal types and designs circulating within the empire, including the region of southern Mesopotamia. It is evident that, while in certain social

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arenas the Achaemenid hegemonic style was desired and emulated, it did not enjoy the same popularity in all possible contexts.

5.6. Sumary

At Persepolis, the Persian king used specific iconography to propagate a particularly desirable political image—that of a righteous king closely tied to the deity, Ahurmazda. However, in peripheral areas of the empire, it appears that the royal connection with the deity was not such an important image to convey. As we have seen, differing contexts invited different uses of the winged disk. In so far as seals and seal impressions are concerned, the different corpora used for the comparanda in this chapter range from those derived from satrapal contexts to non-satrapal cities and from a private temple to a number of funerary contexts. These very diverse sources provide a nuanced view of how the winged disk was manipulated in different strata of society, and in different geographic locations. It is quite apparent that the social context made a great difference to how and when the Achaemenid hegemonic style was expressed. The occurrence of the winged disk also appears to be connected to status in the periphery, and as a mark of service to the king.

The relative rarity of the winged disk motif in the satrapal contexts we have reviewed is quite surprising. As the present survey of material from Sardis, Daskyleion, Memphis, Samaria and Judea has shown, there does not seem to have been a well-defined, pan-satrapal use of the symbol. At Sardis, for example, we find the winged symbol on a gold brachteate in a tomb of unspecified ethnicity. In other words, the symbol appears to have

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been an index of status for the mix of prominent Persians, Lydians and Greek (and other?) elite buried in the tombs. Instead of winning recognition as a satrapal symbol, the winged disk came to serve as a symbol of elite status in these regions.

At Daskyleion, the winged disk appears on several seal impressions, but again not in great quantity. Most strikingly, the symbol occurs on royal name satrapal cylinder seals that reflect the monumental art attested at Persepolis—a circumstance that creates an visual link to the capital city. Here we have a fine example of an association of the king, the satrap and the winged disk—a triad of power apparently not shared by all. This is the kind of symbolism expected, but not found, at the other satrapies. At Memphis, an Egyptian satrapal city, there is only one possible (although unverified) example of the winged disk appearing in glyptic, and little by way of the Achaemenid hegemonic style in the seals.

In the material of ancient Palestine the situation is even more ill-defined. The glyptic material shows no influence of Achaemenid rule, except for imported seals that would seem to have been directly connected with administration, economy or taxation (Stern, 1982: 236). And such Achaemenid style seals were also only briefly attested. Early in the 5th century they were replaced by seals that did no more than carry the name Yehud—the name of the province—written in Aramaic. As Stern has indicated (1982: 237), the change would appear to relate to some kind of a reform. While the Achaemenid hegemonic style appeared among other seal types, and the winged disk is apparent in a

few rare examples, there is a decided lack of reference to the Persian administration in the late 5th century BCE.

In the private archives of Murashu, we find an eventual movement towards the Persian hegemonic style in the seals. However, the winged disk is not a common motif. It does occur in glyptic designs that appear to be more Babylonian in style and content, than Persian. This makes it harder to interpret whether the winged disk in this situation is representational of something already Babylonian, or whether there is a semiotic influence coming from the central Persian administration. Here it does not seem that the winged disk is used specifically or overtly to link the Babylonians to Persia. Again, it is the Achaemenid hegemonic style which seems to be of primary interest.

In the provinces as a whole, therefore, the primary associative symbol of the Achaemenid dynasty appears to have been the heroic encounter as it was found in the Achaemenid hegemonic style. By the same token the political usefulness of the winged disk was no more than limited beyond the bounds of central Persia. Unless archaeologists have simply not discovered the satrapal seals of each region and they actually do mimic the iconography found at Daskyleion (in which instance we could posit that it is indeed the winged disk which acts as the most elite semiotic link to the king), there is not enough evidence to support such an overarching proposition.

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In jewelry as well as in glyptic, the winged disk is rare. In the coinage of the empire,[270] the gold darics and silver sigloi carry as their motif the royal archer, conspicuously without the winged disk (Carradice, 1987: 73). It might seem odd, upon reflection, that there is no allusion to the great god in conjunction with the most royal of Persian heroes found on the coins. But here again the regional distribution of Achaemenid coinage was centered in the western areas of the empire (Carradice, 1987: 92), even if occasional examples have been recovered from Babylon, Egypt and Persepolis (*ibid*: 79). In short, context was again decisive in determining the extent to which the winged disk would figure as a definite icon.

To summarize, we see that there is a much more tenuous connection between the winged disk and the image of the king in the periphery of the empire than in the heartland, close to Persepolis itself. The association of Darius with Ahuramazda simply did not have the same resonance in western parts of the empire. In these latter areas what counted as a visual cue to inclusion in ruling circles was the use of elements of the Achaemenid hegemonic style.

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[270] See Carradice, 1987, plates X-XV, and Stronach, 1989, for the principal types of Achaemenid coinage.

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Chapter 6. Conclusion. The Winged Disc as a Dynastic Marker in Achaemenid Persia

In the previous chapters, I have examined the relationship between religion (expressed through iconography and royal rhetoric) and Darius the Great's "public persona." In the process, I have not sought to define Achameneid religion or its practice, but only to define religion's place as a key building block in the construction of royal Achaemenid identity. I have also sought to answer the query of how religious symbolism was used to create a distinctly different expression of dynastic identity between the reign of Cyrus on the one hand, and that of Darius the Achaemenid on the other. The questions I have addressed in this thesis, through the analysis of excavated cultural material dating to the era of Darius' rule, raise important issues about culture, ethnicity and social inclusion in the ancient Near East. In seeking to define such elements of Achaemenid identity, in this study I have included a dialogue concerning theoretical considerations, as well as methodological issues. It is clear that this dialogue has just begun; additional research and re-evaluation with a strong theoretical base will hopefully continue with currently known and future discoveries of Achaemenid-era material.

What is demonstrated by the use of theory in this inquiry is that cultural and ethnic identity is both multi-valent and malleable, and can be selectively representational according to context. In this particular study, it is shown that—while Darius may have stemmed from a very different origin than that of his predecessors—the whole question of Cyrus' and Darius' actual ethnicities (or, more simply put, cultural definitions)

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becomes less relevant than their ability to fit into, and reshape, the dominant power structure of the empire in the mid-to-late 6th century BCE.

The material manifestations of Achaemenid rule (i.e., glyptic arts, palace structures, architectural relief and large-scale monuments) make it clear that, in the ancient world, the ruler's public identity need not be based on verity, nor need it be constant: it could be both created and manipulated according to the demands of a particular social or political context. For Darius, a clear elite identity apart from that of his predecessors *yet focused on gaining inclusion into the existing power base*, was important enough for him to create a carefully crafted image, and to then repetitively iterate—in text and art—that same image as a vital manifestation of his rule *and legitimacy*. This identity and its resulting legitimacy rested upon a foundation of religious iconography—one that specifically focused on the ruler's association with his chosen deity, Ahuramazda. This deity was symbolized iconographically in the royal visual program as a winged disk. As a symbol of Ahuramazda, the winged disk represented a powerful marker of Achaemenid Persian identity from c. 520 BCE onwards, that is from almost the very beginning of Darius' reign, down to at least 330 BCE.

In the context of monumental art and architecture, as reviewed in chapter 3, the winged disk is shown to have been placed in visually strategic locations throughout the empire. These range from the liminal spaces of palace doorways at Persepolis and the royal rock-cut tomb of Darius at Naqsh-i Rustam in Fars, to the massive cliff-face relief carving of Bisotun (Darius' *res gestae*) in Median territory. In the less eternal medium of glazed

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brick, the symbol appears hovering above winged sphinxes in several friezes in Darius'

palace at Susa, in the traditional Elamite territory of southwest Iran. And on the various

stelae Darius placed in Egypt along the Suez Canal, the most complete example—the

Shallufa stele—depicts the ruler and the winged disk in a Persian context (reverse) and

the Egyptian (obverse) context may well depict a winged disk of the Egyptian variety, as

expressed in the similar Mashkuta stele. Caution is advised, nevertheless, in placing all

winged disks into the category of "symbols for Ahuramazda". For example, winged

disks appear in architectural friezes on the temple of Hibis in Egypt; however, these

predate Darius' renewing of the temple and allude to a purely Egyptian deity. Even with

this example of the symbol carrying a divergent meaning than that intended by Darius'

visual program, those manifestations of the winged disk that allude to the deity

Ahuramazda in the Achaemenid context are associated for the most part, on monumental

structures at least, with his invocation in the adjoining inscriptions. The associations of

both deity and symbol, as well as deity and ruler, are made exceptionally clear.

In the realm of royal administration, addressed in chapter 4, seal impressions on tablets

found in the Persian heartland at Persepolis demonstrate further the unique power of this

symbol to convey messages of allegiance to the ruler, and perhaps even a specific cultural

and religious identity. While the seal impressions on the Persepolis Fortification tablets

reflect a limited or controlled use of the symbol, the symbol occurs more frequently in the

seal impressions on the Persepolis Treasury texts. Although not entirely certain, the

impressions suggest that this difference may be related to status. In the Treasury

impressions, the winged disk appears most frequently with both the court style of glyptic

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design, and in royal name seals. Both suggest a special status in the Achaemenid administrative elite (the same situation is found in the periphery). Those with access to the Treasury were perhaps more privileged in the social hierarchy, and thus their seal designs carry this special emblem of status and inclusion.

Overall, when compared to other numinous iconographic devices used within the Persepolis corpus of glyptic design, the winged disk is predominant in the impressions from the royal capital. There is no doubt that it holds some special significance, at least to a limited, socially bounded group. The winged disk (in its varied incarnations, both with and without emerging human figure), is one of the most frequently appearing "numinous" symbols based on percentages—and thus perhaps one of the most exclusive, important or recognizable symbols on the seals *within the core area specific to the Persian ruling elite*. In both monumental art and on a smaller scale, the winged disk pervades the visual discourse of the empire's capital. This visual association with Ahuramazda is further supported by the placement of the god's name in the major royal inscriptions of the Persian king—in both the monumental format in Parsa, Elam, Media and Egypt, and on smaller inscriptions on architectural elements or foundation tablets at both Susa and Persepolis.

While there are many more examples of this imagery and rhetoric to be found in the Persian homeland than in the more distant reaches of the empire, there are inklings that the symbol nevertheless holds some association with the Persian ruler and perhaps a special class of elites in the periphery. While extremely rare in the glyptic of the

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periphery, at Daskyleion, royal name seals disseminate Persian court art into glyptic form. Seal DS4, a royal name seal of Xerxes (son of Darius), depicts the ruler enthroned under the protection of the winged disk, an echo of the original central panel of the Apadana reliefs at Persepolis. At Sardis we find the winged disk in the sumptuary of "elite" burials, fashioned into gold brachteates. This context may point to a relationship between the symbol and the wearer's social status.

Overall, however, in the satrapal and administrative centers of the peripheral empire, there is a conspicuous lack of the symbol of the winged disk in the known monumental art, and in the majority of seals and impressions. This lacuna is observed in areas as diverse as Samaria, Egypt, Sardis and Babylonia. The rarity or complete absence of the symbol in these locations can perhaps be explained in some cases by the specific circumstances of the particular context. For example, in the Sippar temple archive, there may have been a conscious non-assimilation on the part of the temple administrators due to the loss of their originally favorable economic position following the death of Cambyses. In Samaria, we may have a case of Jewish religious mores overriding the desire to project political messages via certain symbols.

Reviewing the material of chapters 3 and 4, it is clear that the association of Darius the king with his god Ahuramazda simply did not have the same resonance in western parts of the empire as in the administrative core of Parsa.[271] In these far-flung areas, what

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[271] Again, there is not enough evidence from the eastern regions of the empire to include a comparison.

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predominantly counted as a visual cue to inclusion in the sphere of the ruling elite was the use of the Achaemenid hegemonic style in glyptic design. There is simply no universality or consistency (whether we are considering style or simply occurrence) in the use of the symbol of the winged disk in the peripheral regions of Darius' empire.

I have concluded that the visual tie between the Achaemenid monarch and his chosen god was more meaningful in the Persian homeland than anywhere else in the empire. Even in the flagship western satrapal capital of Sardis, those members of the elite who felt that they belonged in, or at least close to, the new, accepted circles of power were careful to express their sense of "membership" by using seals of the new Achaemenid hegemonic style which did not include overtly religious Achaemenid Persian motifs. Comparison of the material of both center and periphery suggests that full Achaemenid identity—something on which Darius' authority ultimately rested—was reserved for those who could invoke Mazda-worshipping Achaemenid Persian credentials. These credentials were meaningless in the periphery, where for the most part Persian elites were placed as satraps and chief administrators. They had little to prove to the "non-Persian, non-Mazda worshipping" masses of the empire—their authority was granted by the king himself (thus the use of royal-name seals in the satrapal administration of Daskyleion).

In the center of power, however, there was much at stake in terms of proving legitimacy among a diverse population of Iranian groups (among others). Here, the symbol could be used to place the members of a specific group apart from the others, while binding them together with one, over-arching identity. It should also be taken into account that it is

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more than likely that Darius was promoting the worship of an existing Iranian deity at the expense of other deities in the region, including long entrenched Elamite gods. Obviously, the relationship of Darius and his dynasty with the deity Ahuramazda was crucial to his legitimacy within Persia—perhaps more so than any real or imagined connection to the line of Cyrus.

Darius' unequivocal embrace of the winged disc as an expression of his devotion to Ahuramazda may also be counted as a stroke of genius. In his own homeland repeated usage of this image provided it, quickly enough, with its intended, new identity. The repeated viewing of an image can ultimately lead to its acceptance in society, even if imbued with a new or alternate meaning. And, beyond the homeland, audiences of one kind or another would have recognized a familiar symbol for a supreme deity, whether or not they also linked it with Assur, Shamash, Haldi or Re. Its familiarity was key to its absorption into the visual code of the multi-cultured empire.

The extent to which this finding does or does not separate Darius from Cyrus is still not clear. On the one hand Darius' very assertive belief in Ahuramazda could suggest that he—and the Persians—chose to follow a new form of Mazda worship that had not obtained under Cyrus or his son, Cambyses. On the other hand, however, it would have made little sense for Darius to marry each and every eligible daughter of Cyrus (and hence to have depended, at least in part, on Cyrus' bloodline for the legitimacy of his heirs) if Cyrus' Persianness, let alone his religious convictions and ensuing persona, had been so very different from the one Darius chose to broadcast. In other words, it may be

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necessary to take into account a difference in <u>style</u>: a difference that may stem from the perception (especially later, during the time of Darius) of Cyrus' *established* legitimate right to rule, as opposed to Darius' no more than contested right to rule.[272]

There remains the question of why Darius felt the need to stress his allegiance to Ahuramazda with special reference to the reception of his belief among the Persian nobles. Apart from Darius' conceivably genuine personal convictions, it would seem possible that this important constituency, perhaps unnerved by the multiplicity of old and new beliefs that managed to flourish under Cyrus' benign rule, needed certain assurances that their own preference for some form of Mazda worship would be respected by the new monarch. In a way, therefore, Darius may have been sending signals to these necessary political allies that their hopes were justified: that he and his chosen deity would establish, and maintain, <u>Arta</u>: that is, divinely sanctioned order (and no doubt, stability) throughout the land.

I propose that this need to "bring order to the land" is the most plausible explanation for Darius' promotion of Ahuramazda and the Achaemenid visual program. It would clarify why Darius needed to promote his relationship to Ahuramazda in the homeland; place fireholders like the ones used at Pasargadae in his funerary relief; and connect his lineage

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[272] In making this point, I am suggesting that, whatever the ancestry of Cyrus the Great and Cambyses II may have been, both of these Teispid rulers may have viewed themselves— and have been viewed as—Persians. In additions, as Waters (2005: 97) has pointed out, there are not only reasons to think that Cyrus' wife, Cassandane, was an Achaemenid, but that others of the clan, such as Darius (the spearbearer of Cambyses II) and Darius' father, Hystaspes (a high official in the province of Parthia), were apparently prominent before Darius' own accession to the throne.

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with that of Cyrus, while at the same time distinguishing his dynasty and his ethnicity from the non-Persian and non-Mazda worshippers who were a threat to the cohesion of the ruling class. Those already established in power in the homeland, at least to some extent, identified themselves as Mazda worshippers, and Darius' full-blown promotion of Ahuramazda along with his proudly proclaimed Persian identity would have resonated with this significant power base. Accordingly, even if Darius usurped power that was not rightfully his, he was able to emerge as the accepted heir to the throne of Persia. He was able to replace the Teispid dynasty with his own, while keeping the essence of the empire's power intact.[273] And, in the h omeland, the symbol of the winged disk expressed the verities of this power base. Further afield, this symbol could still be associated with the empire's ruling elite, though it clearly played a less prominent role. At the center, the symbol of the winged disk represented validation and inclusion into an elite group of autocrats and ruling figures: it became, in short, the most potent emblem of the durable Achaemenid dynasty and rule.

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[273] As stated by Waters (2005: 95) "the accession of Darius was not the reassertion of the Achaemenid dynasty, but the creation of that dynasty".
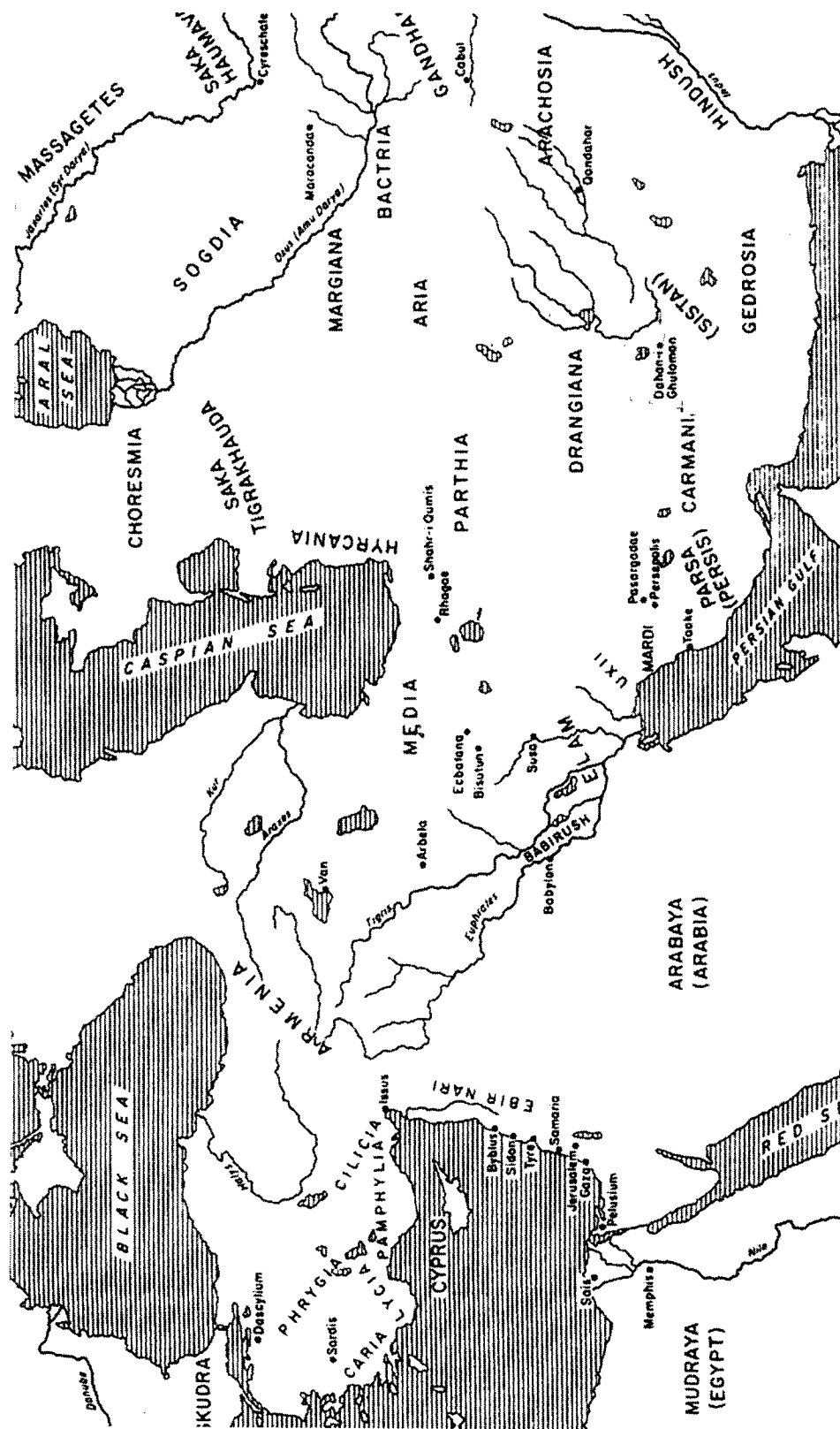
Fig. 1.1. Map of the Persian Empire (after Wiesehofer, 2001: 6, map 1)

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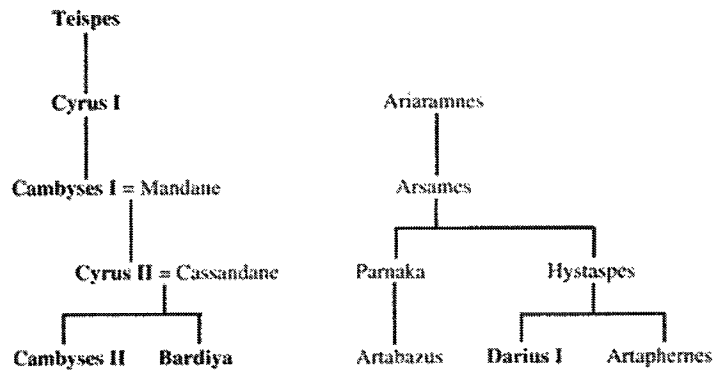
Fig. 2.1. Dynastic Lines of Cyrus II and Darius I (detail; after Brosius, 2000: xxiii)

Fig. 3.1. The Bisotun Relief of Darius the Great (detail; after Wiesehofer, 2001: pl. 1)

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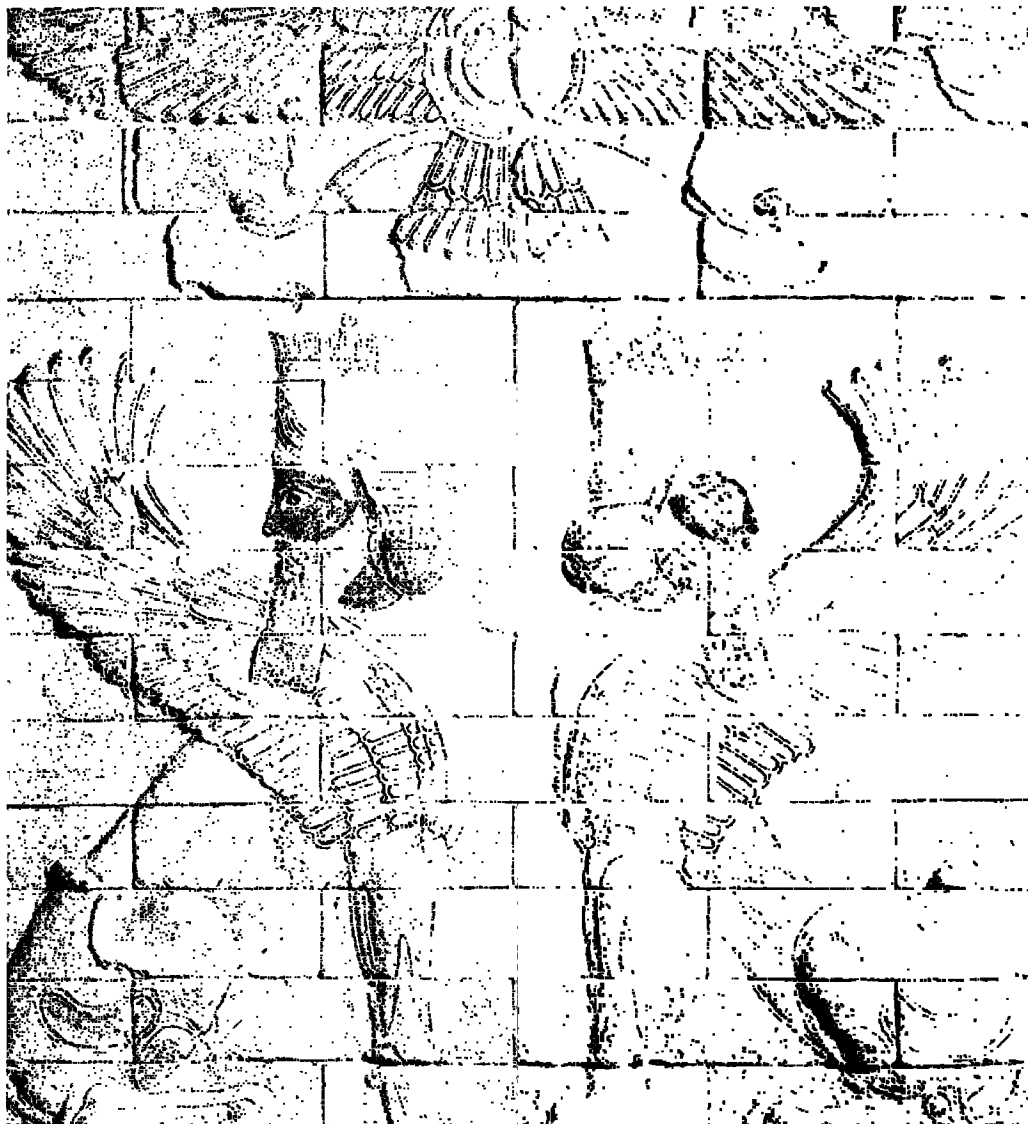
Fig. 3.2. Brick Frieze from Susa (after Harper et al, 1992:229, fig. 157)

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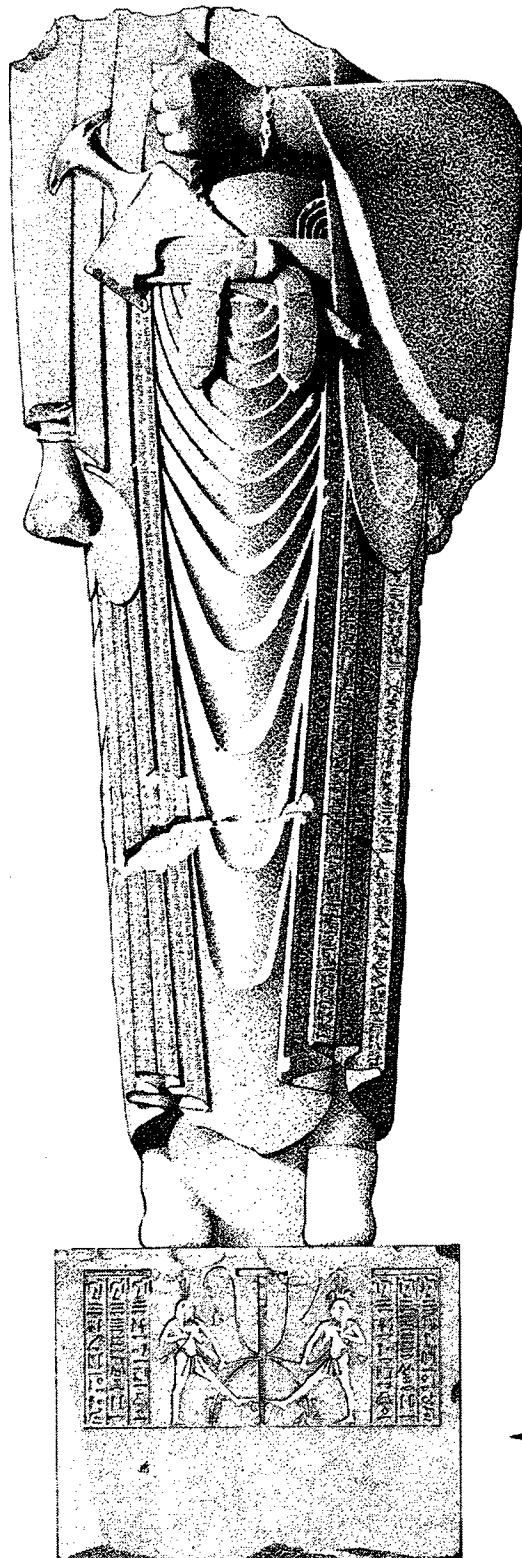
Fig. 3.3. Statue of Darius, Susa (after H. Gonnet in Perrot et al, 1974: 204, fig. 20)

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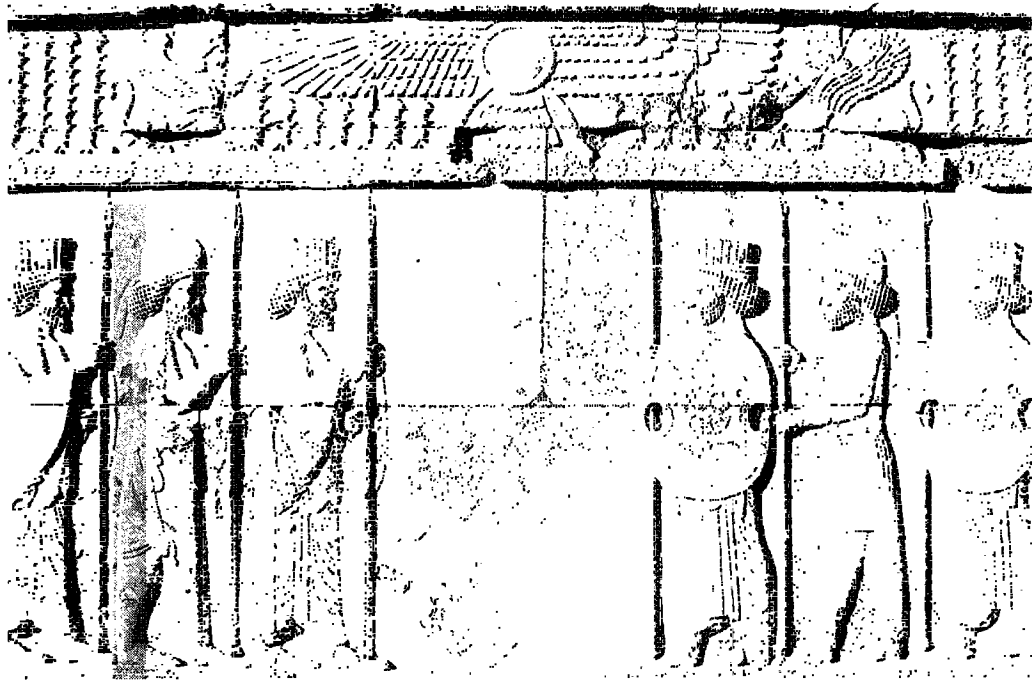
Fig. 3.4.a Files of Persian guards, Apadana Relief, Persepolis (after Schmidt, 1953: pl. 22)

Fig. 3.4.b Seated Monarch, Apadana Relief, Persepolis (after Schmidt, 1953: pl. 99)

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Fig. 3.5. Tachara Doorway Relief (detail; after Schmidt, 1953: pl. 105)

Fig. 3.6. Tachara Doorway Relief (detail; after Schmidt, 1953: pl. 106)

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Fig. 3.7.a. Trypilon; E. Doorway
(detail; after Schmidt, 1953: pl. 78)

Fig. 3.8. Trypilon
(detail; after Schmidt, 1953: pl. 75)

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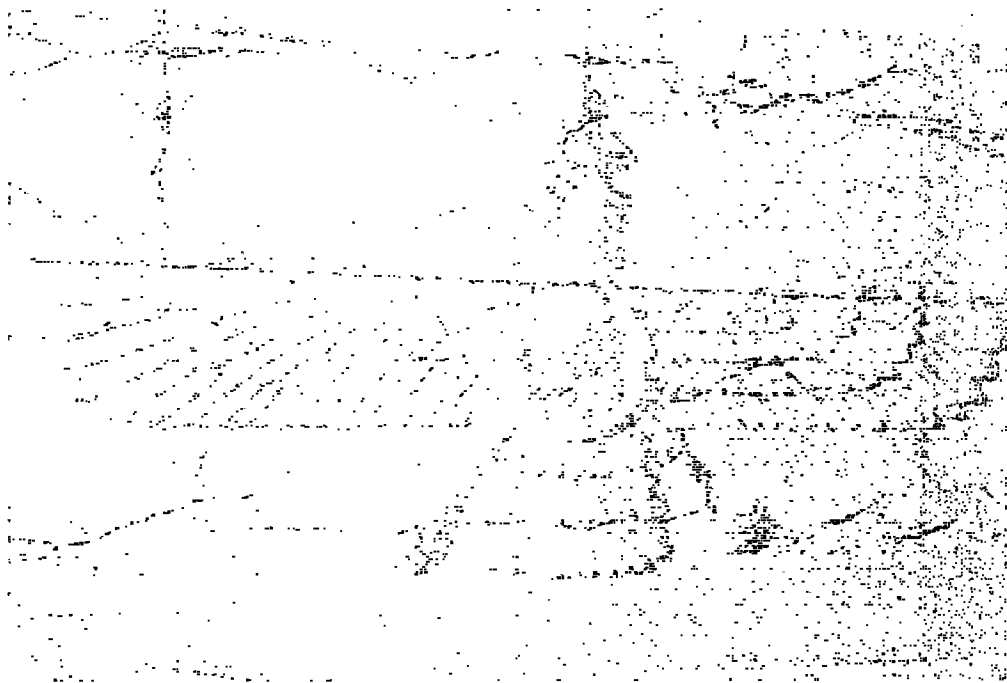
Fig. 3.7b. Trypilon; Doorway Relief of Ahuramazda (detail, after Schmidt, 1957: pl. 79)
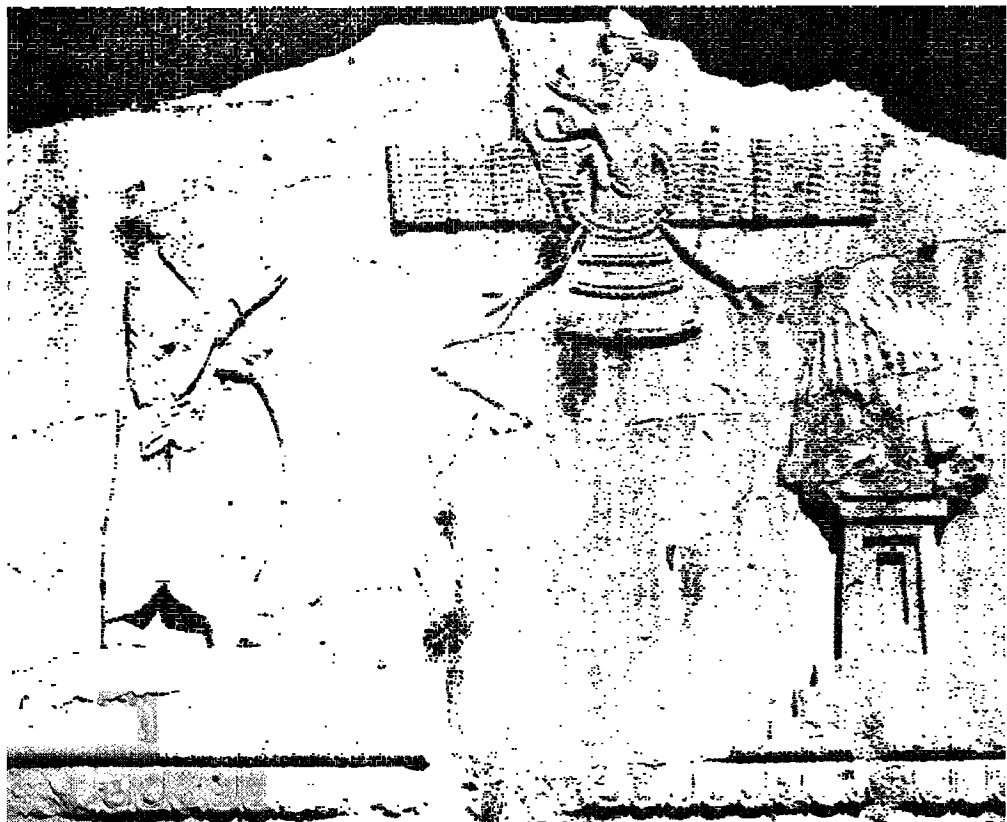
Fig. 3.9. Naqsh-i Rustam: The Tomb of Xerxes (detail; after Schmidt, 1970: pl. 42)

210
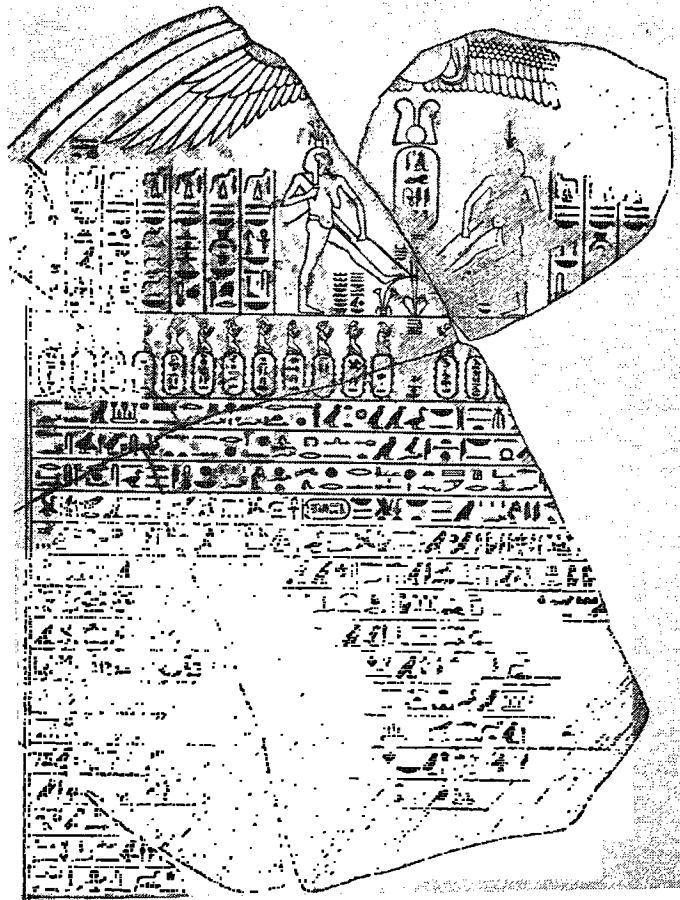
Fig. 3.10a Drawing of Mashkuta Stele (detail, after Roaf, 1974: 89, fig. a)

Fig. 3.10b Shallufa Stele, (detail; after Lloyd, in Tuplin et al, 2007:105, fig. 3)

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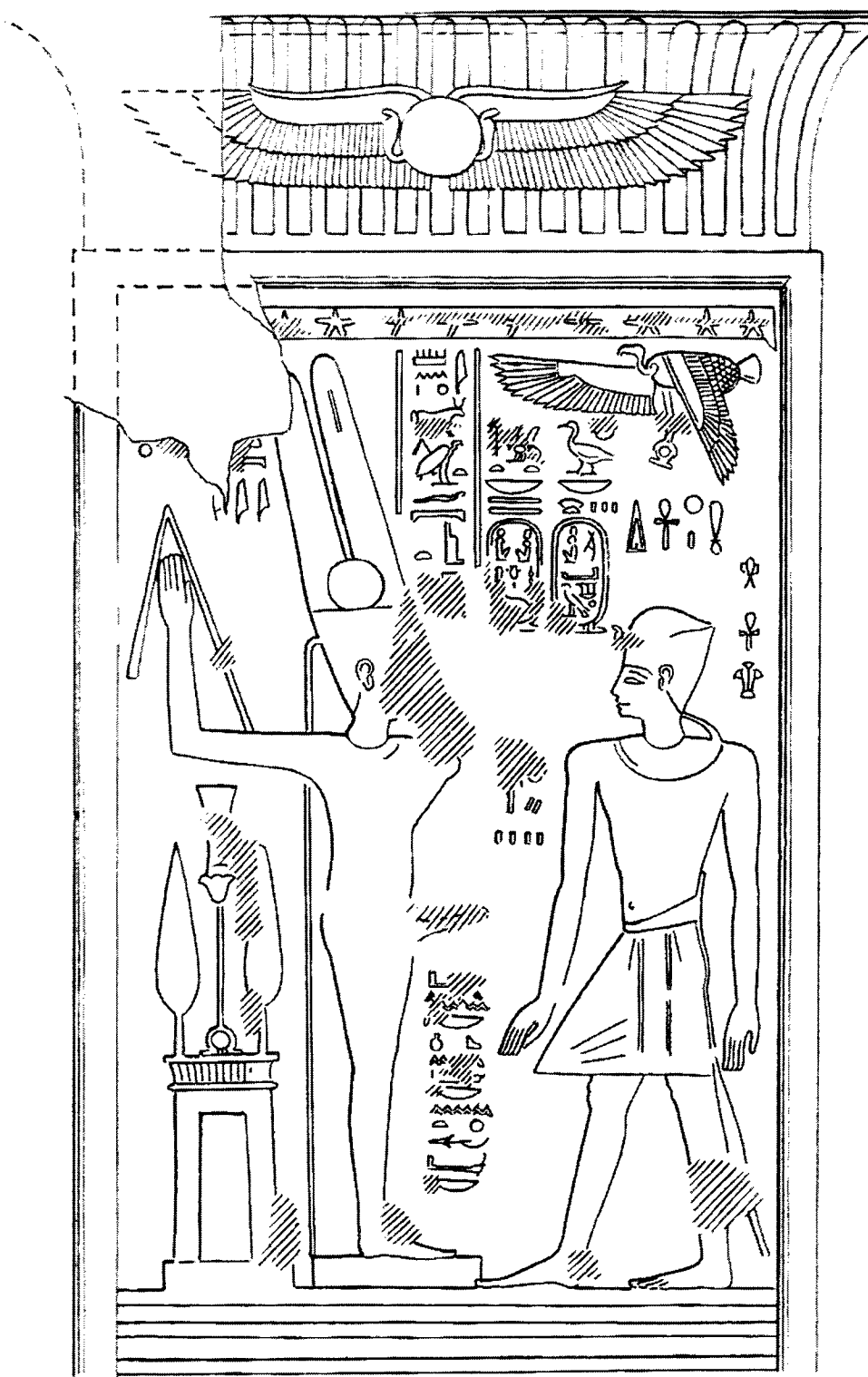
Fig. 3.11. Hibis Temple, Hypostyle B Doorway with Winged Disk (after Davies, 1953: pl.12)

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I. Seal Iconography

CF   =   Crowned Figure
HE   =   Heroic Encounter
RS   =   Ritual Scene
WD   =   Winged Disk
WDF =   Winged Disk with Figure
N   =   Nimbus
NF   =   Nimbus with Figure
AF   =   Atlas Figure
PC   =   Podium Creature
A   =   Altar
ST   =   Stylized Tree
P   =   Palm
LS   =   Lunate Symbol
AS   =   Astral Symbol
OS   =   Other Symbol
M   =   Mischweisen

II. Seal Ownership

RM   =   Royal Male
M   =   Male
RF   =   Royal Female
F   =   Female

III. Other

IN   =   Inscription*
*(A=Aramaic;E=Elamite; B=Babylonian; Other)

Chr =   Chronology+
+ (king's reign or earliest known date of seal's use)

Fr   =   Frequency of Occurrence

St   =   Style**
**(as determined by Garrison and Root, 2001)
  lin. = linear
  mod. = modeled
  ct. = court
  ft. = fortification
  mix. = mixed
  br. = broad
  fl. = flat
  div. = diverse

Fig. 4.1. Abbreviations and Categories

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Office Seals :

PFS#	CF	HE	RS	WD	WDF	N	NF	AF	PF	A	ST	P	LS	AS	OS	IN	st	Fr	Chr
PFS1*		x											x			E	mod	233	506+
PFS4*		x														E	mod	102	504+
PFS7*	x	x			x							x				tri	crt	115	503/2
PFS33		x															tt	21	501
PFS43*		x														E	d	20	503/2
PFS65		x															mod	12	501
PFS113*	x	x		?	?							x				tri	ct	6	495/4

Personal Seals of Supply/Apportionment Officers

PFS#	CF	HE	RS	WD	WDF	N	NF	AF	PF	A	ST	P	LS	AS	OS	IN	st	Fr	Chr
PFS2		x															d	111	502
PFS20		x															d	16	501
PFS29		x											x	x			mod	17	504 3
PFS63		x															fort	14	nd
PFS79	x	x															ft	17	500
PFS132		x															ft	5	nd
PFS151		x															tt	7	503
PFS815*		x														A	mod	3	504/3
PFS859*		x		?	?											L	ct	2	503/2

Personal Seals of Tax Collectors

PFS#	CF	HE	RS	WD	WDF	N	NF	AF	PF	A	ST	P	LS	AS	OS	IN	st	Fr	Chr
PFS34		x															ft	12	500
PFS 1632		x														B	mod	2	504

Personal Seals of Various Officers

PFS#	CF	HE	RS	WD	WDF	N	NF	AF	PF	A	ST	P	LS	AS	OS	IN	st	Fr	Chr
PFS32*		x														E	mod	30	503
PFS64*		x														U	ft	9	504/3
PFS72		x															mod	8	nd
PFS225		x									x						ft	2	499

Personal Seals of Women

PFS#	CF	HE	RS	WD	WDF	N	NF	AF	PF	A	ST	P	LS	AS	OS	IN	st	Fr	Chr
PFS38		x					x				x		x		x		md	50+	501
PFS1437s		x															tt,s		49?

Fig. 4.2.a PF Inscribed Seals

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Various Personal Seals

PFS#	CF	HE	RS	WD	WDF	N	NF	AF	PF	A	ST	P	LS	AS	OS	IN	st	Fr	Chr
PFS26		x												x				:ıt	:4	499
PFS1613		x																ft	t	495
PFS98*		x															ë	m	:5	nc
PFS1566*		x															E	m	2	497
PFS9*		x												x	x		A	:	.8	505
PFS16*		x															A	m	43	500
PFS139s	x	x																ñ	2	499
PFS1428s	x	x																ft	1	499

Personal Seals of Accountants

PFS#	CF	HE	RS	WD	WDF	N	NF	AF	PF	A	ST	P	LS	AS	OS	IN	st	Fr	Chr
PFS57*		x															E	mod	19	501
PFS99		x																mod	8	504
PFS103*		x															E	ft	14	500
PFS228		x									?	?						ft	١	502
PFS513		x																m	10	503
PFS1582		x																mix	2	503

Personal Seals of Various Suppliers

PFS#	CF	HE	RS	WD	WDF	N	NF	AF	PF	A	ST	P	LS	AS	OS	IN	st	Fr	Chr
PFS10		x														x		f	32	500
PFS17		x												x				f	24	501
PFS67		x																f	7	500
PFS138		x																f	4	nd
PFS201		x																f	3	494
PFS940		x																f.	2	500
PFS1252		x																f	1	493

Personal Seals of Various Men Leading Groups

PFS#	CF	HE	RS	WD	WDF	N	NF	AF	PF	A	ST	P	LS	AS	OS	IN	st	Fr	Chr
PFS1612		x																mix	1	495
PFS1285		x																fort	1	500
PFS1447		x																fort	1	nd

Personal Seals of Elite Guides

PFS#	CF	HE	RS	WD	WDF	N	NF	AF	PF	A	ST	P	LS	AS	OS	IN	st	Fr	Chr
PFS49		x																fort	13	499
PFS213		x																lin	2	500
PFS1325		x																mix	1	500
PFS1460		x																fort	1	nd

Fig. 4.2.b PF Inscribed Seals

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Personal Seals of Fast Messengers

PFS#	CF	HE	RS	WD	WDF	N	NF	AF	PF	A	ST	P	LS	AS	OS	IN	st	Fr	Chr
PFS1260s		x															fort	1	495
PFS1264s		x															fort	1	494

Personal Seals of Various Receivers

PFS#	CF	HE	RS	WD	WDF	N	NF	AF	PF	A	ST	P	LS	AS	OS	IN	st	Fr	Chr
PFS146		x															fort	5	501?
PFS1391		x															mix	1	499
PFS1440		x												x			fort	2	nd
PFS1684	?	x		?													court	1	494

Personal Seals of Various Travelers

PFS#	CF	HE	RS	WD	WDF	N	NF	AF	PF	A	ST	P	LS	AS	OS	IN	st	Fr	Chr
PFS298s		x															tt	4	500
PFS1238		x															mix	1	499
PFS1276		x									x						tt	2	nd
PFS1286		x															mod	1	499
PFS1300		x															tt	2	499
PFS1309s		x													?		div	1	nd
PFS1311s		x															mod	2	nd
PFS1321s		x															div	1	495
PFS1322		x															tt	:	nd
PFS1362		x									x								
PFS1367s		x															tt	1	498
PFS1374		x													?		mix	1	499
PFS1375s		x															fl	:	nd
PFS1387				?				?									mod	1	493
PFS1406		x															tt	:	500
PFS1463s		x											x		x		tt	1	nd

Additional Inscribed Seals--Scenes of Human Activity not published in Garrison-Root, 2001.

PFS#	CF	HE	RS	WD	WDF	N	NF	AF	PF	A	ST	P	LS	AS	OS	IN	st	Fr	Chr
PFS389	x			x					x							≡	ct		
PFS11	x		x	x						x		x			x	tri	ct		D

Cat= Catalogue #, as per Garrison + Root 2001
* = used alone
Type = texts from the PF archive subdivided by G. Cameron into categories of use.

Fig. 4.2.c PF Inscribed Seals

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Seal CAT.#	PFS#	CF	HE	RS	WD	WDF	N	NF	AF	PF	A	ST	P	LS	AS	OS	IN	St	Fr	Chr
1	102	?	x											x	x			ft	7	499
8	1189		x		x													mix	1	500
25	95		x												x			ft	5	500
28	329		x												x			mix	2	500
29	1071		x			x			x				x		x			mix	1	499/98
30	1362		x									x	x					fort	1	nd
34	1276		x											x				fort	2	nd
39	1142		x											x				fort	3	500
40	1146		x									x						ft	2	504
42	1440		x									x		x				ft	2	nd
45	1053		x															ft	2	501/0
46	225	x ?	x			x			x									ft	2	499/8
49	120		x		x	x												ft	2	504/3
58	774		x											x				ct	11	499/8
60	851		x										x					mix	2	500/499
61	1072		x									x			x			mix	1	499/8
62	1444	x	x		x											x		ft	1	nd
68	1091		x											x	x			ft	1	499/8
71	1081		x											x	x			mix	1	500/99
75	123		x														A	ct	7	500/499
100	326		x															AB	5	495/4
104	62		x												x			hr	7	504/3
107	781		x									x						ft	2	494/3
108	496		x												x			bf	1	501/0
110	749		x												x			ft	3	502/1
117	222		x															lm	6	498
120	1030		x											x		x		ft	3	500
122	1654		x													x		div	2	500/499
115	145		x									x						ft	6	498
123	884		x															mod	1	500/99
127	1023		x															ft	2	nd
129	944		x									x						ft	4	497/6
130	494		x									x						..:	2	499/8
131	731		x									x						ft	3	494/3
133	334		x									x						mod	1	500
136	1204		x									x						ft	3	500/99
143	632		x															ft	3	502/1
148	228		x								x				x					

Fig. 4.3.a PF Uninscribed Seals

Iconographic Categories (cont.)

Seal CAT.#	PFS#	CF	HE	RS	WD	WDF	N	NF	AF	PF	A	ST	P	LS	AS	OS	TN	St	Fr	Chr
149	364		x											x		x		ft	1	503/2
156	1026		x	x												x		mod	1	497
159	1236		x													x		ft	-	499
169	1099		x															ft	2	nd
170	131		x															ft	13	501/00
171	971		x									x						mix	3	499
381	179		x									x						ft	2	504
188	234		x										x					bf	2	503/2
189	849		x									x						mix	2	505
192	514		x									x						ft	7	501/0
193	1076		x		x							x						ft	3	494
196	1002		x															ft	-	nd
197	109		x									x		x				ft	5	499
202	80		x															lin	11	504/3
204	853		x												x			mix	2	500/99
212	149		x												x	x		ft	8	498/7
224	196		x		x													bf	2	500/99
225	260		x											x				ft	7	500/99
231	1463s		x									x						ft	1	nd
234	1466		x															ft	3	503/2
235	17		x									x		x		x		lin	24	501
238	1501		x										x					mix	1	500/99
242	58		x												x			ft	10	500/499
243	902		x									x	x			x		bf	1	nd
249	162		x													x		ft	3	nd
250	125		x															ft	1	499/8
251	10		x															mod	32	500
257	1480		x											x				mod	3	nd
260	964		x									x		x	x			lin	1	497/6
265	818		x											x	x			ft	5	501/00
279	1123		x													x		ft	3	nd
282	112		x											x				ft	7	502
284	114		x															ft	4	499
287	614		x									x		x	x			ft	2	498/71
291	30		x									x			x			mod	34	500/499

Fig. 4.3.b PF Uninscribed Seals

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Seal — **Iconographic Categories (cont.)**

CAT.#	PFS#	CF	HE	RS	WD	WDF	N	NF	AF	PF	A	ST	P	LS	AS	OS	IN	St	Fr	Chr
299	26		x												x			ft	14	499
300	130		x	x											x			ft	5	499
302	29		x	x											x			mod	17	504/3
303	243		x											x		x		bf	7	500/99
304	6		x											x	x			d	32	503/2
308	896		x											x	x			bf	1	498/7
309	280		x										x							
310	435		x															bf		498.7
311	148		x										x			x		ft	6	501/0
312	538		x		?										x			mod	4	nd

Scenes of Human Activity (Garrison, 2000)—not published in Garrison and Root, 2001

CAT.#	PFS#	CF	HE	RS	WD	WDF	N	NF	AF	PF	A	ST	P	LS	AS	OS	IN	St	Fr	Chr
na	68			x				x			x					x		mix		
na	75			x																

Fig. 4.3.c PF Uninscribed Seals

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Seal ID #	CF	HE	RS	WD	WDF	N	NF	AF	PF	A	ST	P	LS	AS	OS	IN
PFS82			x		x				x							A
PFS83				x					x					x	x	A
PFS91	?		x		x				x						x	
PFS105s			x				x	x			x					
PFS115				x							x					x
PFS122			x		x			x		?	?			x		
PFS166			x	x							x				x	
PFS211	?		x	x	?				x							
PFS216	x		x	x	?			x	?							
PFS244s	?		x				x			?	?		x	x		
PFS269			?												x	
PFS310	?		x		x			x		?	x					
PFS420			x		x			x		?	?					
PFS522	?	x		x	?											
PFS553											x					
PFS586s			x		x			x			x					
PFS790			x			x					x					x
PFS793s			x		x			x			x					
PFS1085	?		x								x					
PFS1164	?		x				x									
PFS1312s														x		
PFS1359			x	x	?			x								
PFS1431			x	?							?				x	
PFS1567	?		x		x				x							
PFS1591	?		x				x				x					
PFS1601	?		x	x	?					?					x	

*This chart is based on drawings of seal impressions generously supplied by Mark Garrison, who is preparing their publication in Vol. II of "Seals of the Persepolis Fortification Tablets" in conjunction with M. C. Root.

S=stamp seal impression

Fig. 4.4. PF Unpublished

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Seals from the Reign of Darius

Seal #	PT.#	CF	HE	RS	WD	WDF	N	NF	AF	PF	A	ST	P	LS	AS	OS	IN	Chr	Notes
1	4673	?	x							x			x			x	x	D	Darius inscription trilingual-OP, E, Bab
2	4658	x	x										x			x	x	D	Darius inscription trilingual
	4726					x													Darius inscription trilingual
3	4860	x	x										x				x	D	Darius inscription trilingual
4	4332	x	x							x						x	x	D	
14	4506	x		x		x							x				x	D	possibly Darius
24	4844				x												x		
33	4675														x	x		x	D	

Seals from the Reign of Xerxes

Seal #	PT.#	CF	HE	RS	WD	WDF	N	NF	AF	PF	A	ST	P	LS	AS	OS	IN	Chr	Notes
5	4650	x	x		x								x				x	X	Xerxes inscription
6	4749	x	x		x						x			x				x	X	Xerxes inscription
	862	x	x		?															
7	612	x	x		x									x				x	X	Xerxes inscription
8	4471	x	x		x									x				x	X	Xerxes inscription
	(549a)														x	x				

Actual Seals: Unknown Chronology

Seal #	PT.#	CF	HE	RS	WD	WDF	N	NF	AF	PF	A	ST	P	LS	AS	OS	IN	Chr on
n/a	4939				x								?			?			
n/a	6673																x		
n/a	5351												x						
n/a	5413		x																
n/a	5791	?										?			x	x			
n/a	61											x			x	x			
stamp	767								x						x		x		
stamp	4554a							x											

Fig. 4.5.a PT Treasury

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Seals of Unknown Chronology: Darius I to Artaxerxes I

Seal #	PT.#	CF	HE	RS	WD	WDF	N	NF	AF	PF	A	ST	P	LS	AS	OS	IN	Chr
9	634	x	x													x		
10	4769	x	x			?												
11	4830	x	x													x		
12	4979	x	x															
15	4682	x		x	x			x		x								
16	4444	x		x	x	x		x		x					?			
17	4704	x		x	?	?		?		?	?							
18	4976			x	x		x		x	?								
19	4894				x	?			x							x		
20	3363			x	x						x							
	-3384																	
21	4198	x		x	x	?		?		?	x							
22	4706	x		x	x						x							
23	4704	x		x							?							
25	4421				x								x					
26	4443			x														
27	4702																	
30	4758												x			x		
32	6179				x													
36	4655				?													
	4704				x													
	4841																	
	6100																	
57	6215			?														
61	4774			x							x			x				
62	6293			x							x			x				

Fig. 4.5.b PT Treasury

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PF Inscribed Seals—77 Total

Motif	CF	HE	RS	WD	WD(r)	N	NF	AF	PF	A	ST	P	LS	AS	OS
Quantity	7-8	75	2	1-4	2-3	0	1	0-1	1	1-2	2-3	5	7	3	4-6
%	9-10	100	2	1-5	2-3	0	1	0-1	1	1	3-4	6	9	4	5-7

PF Uninscribed Seals—85 Total

Motif	CF	HE	RS	WD	WD(c)	N	NF	AF	PF	A	ST	P	LS	AS	OS
Quantity	2-4	83	3	5-6	3	0	1	2	0	2	19	12	23	24	18
%	2-5	99	4	6-7	4	0	1	2	0	2	22	14	27	29	21

PF Unpublished Seals—26 Total

Motif	CF	HE	RS	WD	WD(r)	N	NF	AF	PF	A	ST	P	LS	AS	OS
Quantity	1-11	1	20-21	8-9	8-13	1	4	9	4-5	5-11	5-7	0	1	4	6
%	4-42	3	77	31	31-50	3	15	31	15	42	15-27	0	3	14	23

Treasury Seals—Darius (7)

Motif	CF	HE	RS	WD	WD(r)	N	NF	AF	PF	A	ST	P	LS	AS	OS
Quantity	4-5	4	1	1	2				2			4	1	1	3
%	10-12	10	2	2	5				5			10	2	2	7

Treasury Seals—Xerxes (4)

Motif	CF	HE	RS	WD	WD	N	NF	AF	PF	A	ST	P	LS	AS	OS
Quantity	4	4		3-4					1			4			
%	10	10		7-10					2			10			

Treasury Seals—Unknown Chronology(30)

Motif	CF	HE	RS	WD	WD	N	NF	AF	PF	A	ST	P	LS	AS	OS
U#	10-11	5	12-13	12-14	1-5	1	3-5	2	2-5	6-8	1-2	2	5	1-3	6
%	24-27	12	29	27-34	2-12	2	7-12	5	5-12	15-20	2-5	5	12	2-7	15

Treasury Seals—All—41 Total

Motif	CF	HE	RS	WD	WD(r)	N	NF	AF	PF	A	ST	P	LS	AS	OS
Quantity	18-20	13	12-13	16-19	3-7	1	3-5	2	5-10	6-8	1-2	10	6	2-5	9
%	44-49	32	29-32	39-46	7-17	2	7-12	5	12-24	15-20	2-5	24	15	5-12	22

Total All Seals—PF and PT—229 Total

Motif	CF	HE	RS	WD	WD(F)	N	NF	AF	PF	A	ST	P	LS	AS	OS
Quantity	27-42	171	35-37	30-39	15-21	2	10-12	13-14	10-16	13-22	29-34	26	37	33-36	37-39
%	12-18	75	15-16	13-17	7-9	1	4-5	6	4-7	6-9	13-15	11	16	14-16	16-17

Fig. 4.6. All Seals

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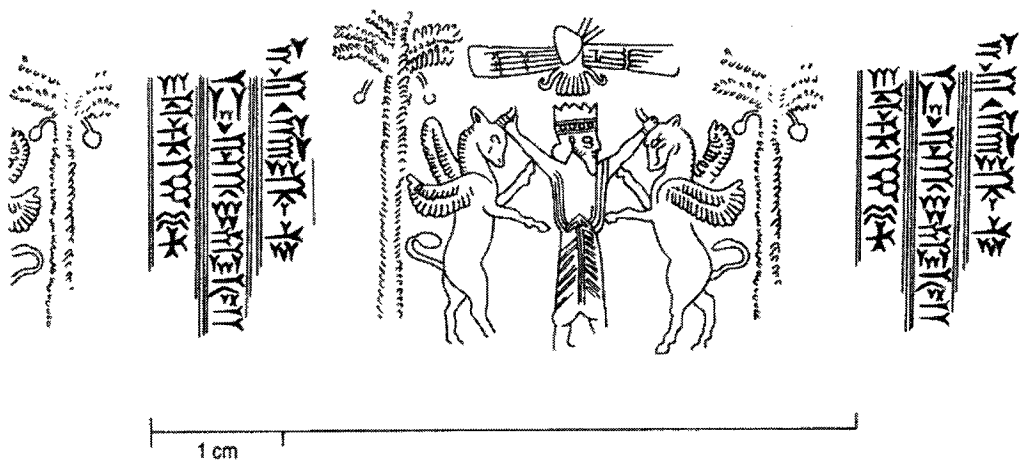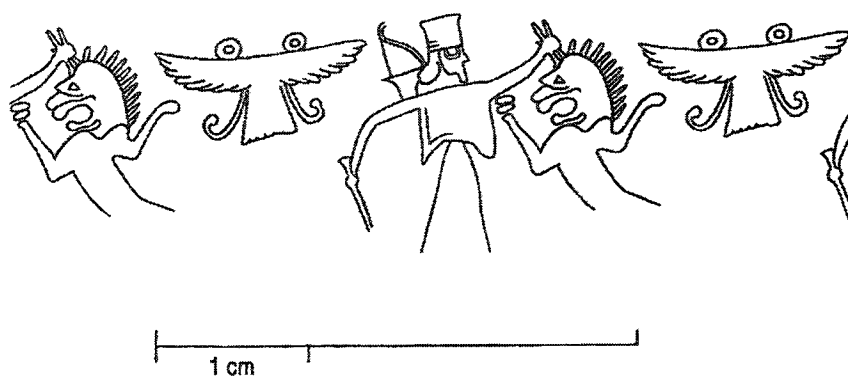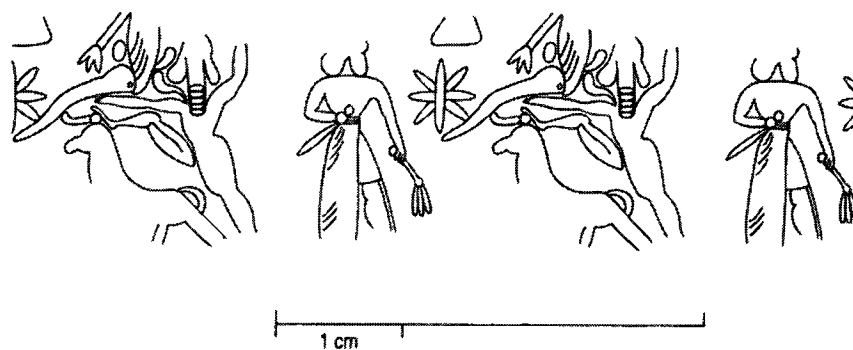
Fig. 4.7. PFS 7 (drawing courtesy of the Persepolis Fortification Tablet Seal Project, Mark B. Garrison and Margaret Cool Root, 2001: 68)
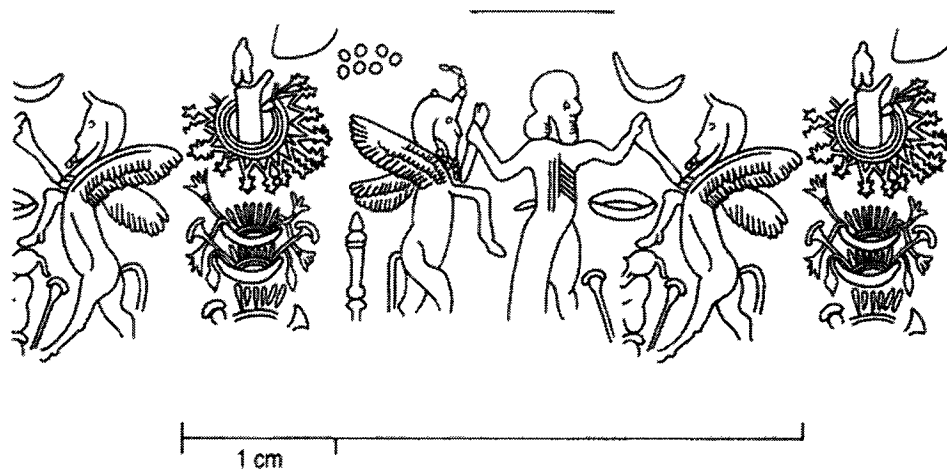
Fig. 4.8. PFS 38, Seal of Irtashduna (drawing courtesy of the Persepolis Fortification Tablet Seal Project, Mark B. Garrison and Margaret Cool Root, 2001: 83)
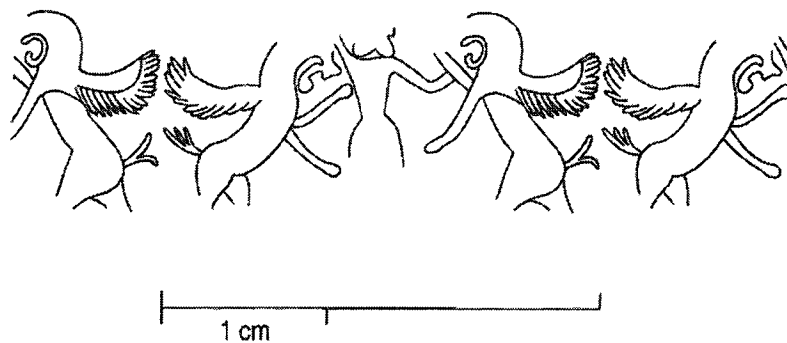
Fig. 4.9. PFS 100, Seal of Irdabada (drawing courtesy of the Persepolis Fortification Tablet Seal Project, Mark B. Garrison and Margaret Cool Root, 2001: 387)

224
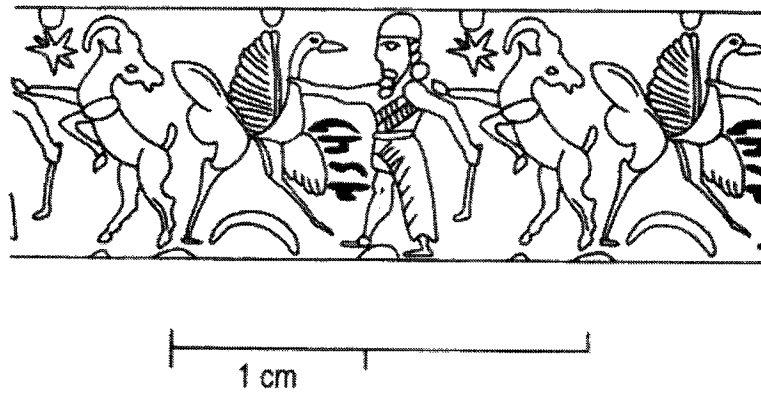
Fig. 4.10 Seal of Parnaka, PFS 9 (drawing courtesy of the Persepolis Fortification Tablet Seal Project, Mark B. Garrison and Margaret Cool Root, 2001: 404)

Fig. 4.11 Drawing of Seal of Darius "from Thebes", Egypt (after Brosius, 2000: 27, fig. 4)
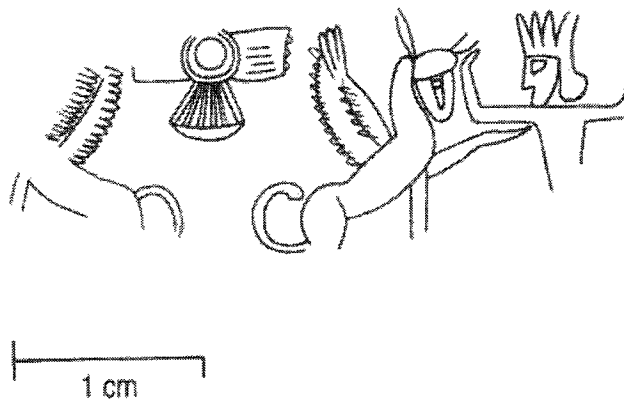
Fig. 4.12 PFS 1189 (drawing courtesy of the Persepolis Fortification Tablet Seal Project, Mark B. Garrison and Margaret Cool Root, 2001: 75)

225
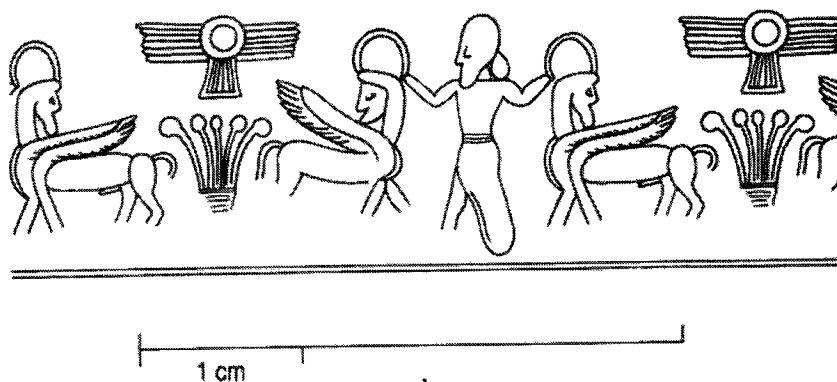
Fig. 4.13 PFS 514 (drawing courtesy of the Persepolis Fortification Tablet Seal Project, Mark B. Garrison and Margaret Cool Root, 2001: 284)

Fig.4.14. PFS 196 (drawing courtesy of the Persepolis Fortification Tablet Seal Project, Mark B. Garrison and Margaret Cool Root, 2001: 326)

Fig. 4.15 PFS 538 (drawing courtesy of the Persepolis Fortification Tablet Seal Project, Mark B. Garrison and Margaret Cool Root, 2001: 440)

226
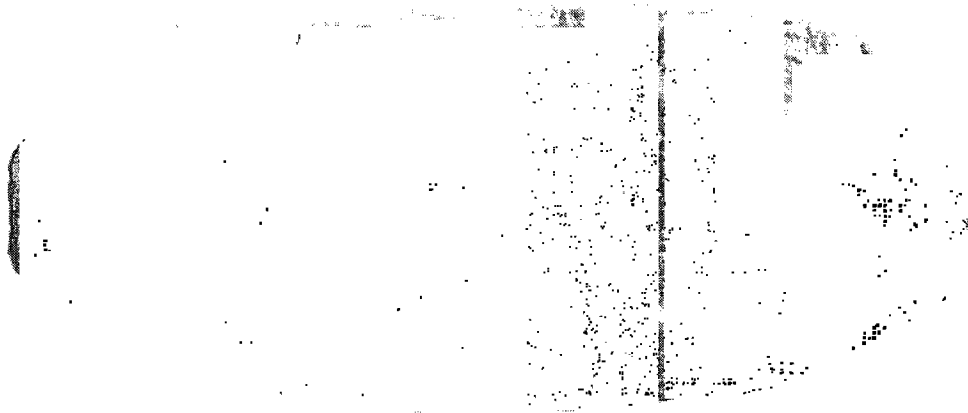
Fig. 4.16 Treasury Seal #1 (PT 4673) (after Schmidt, 1957: pl. 3)

Fig. 4.17 Treasury Seal #2 (PT 4658) (after Schmidt, 1957: pl. 3)
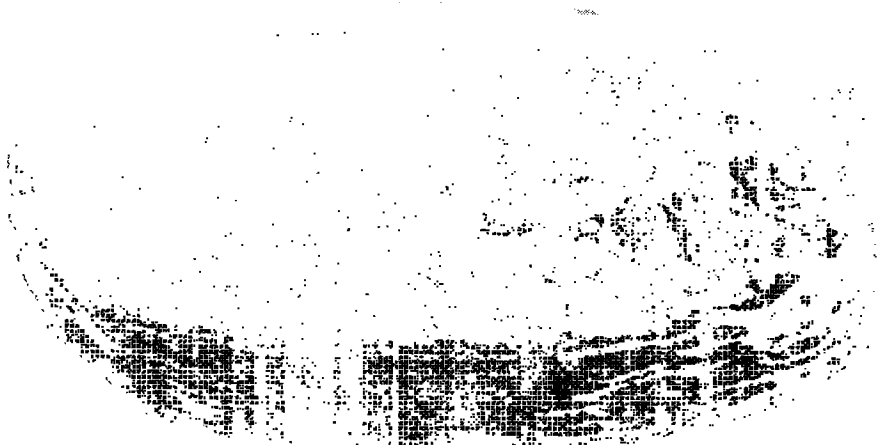
Fig. 4.18 Treasury Seal #14 (PT 4506), Seal of Aspathines (after Schmidt, 1957: pl. 6)

227
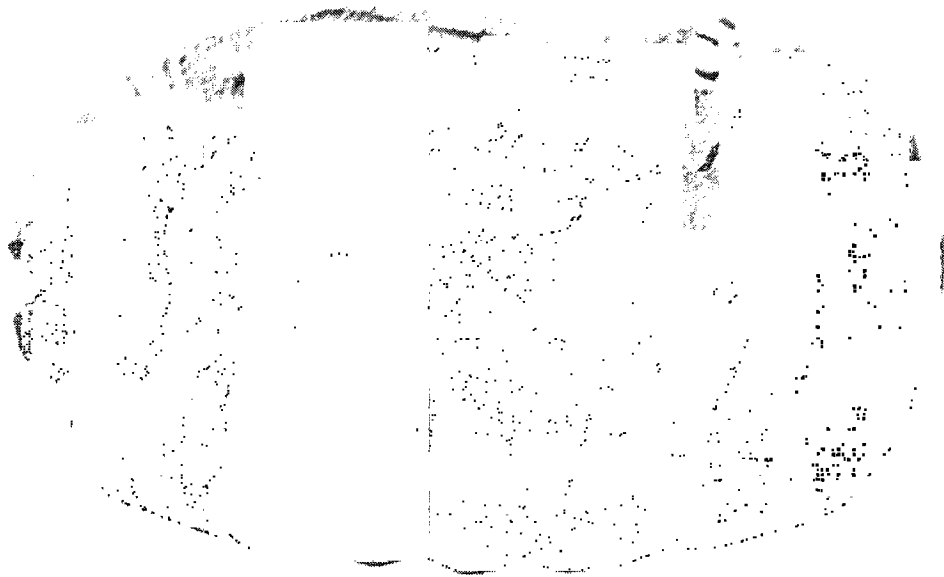
4.19 Treasury Seal # 24 (PT 4844); Seal of Appishmanda (after Schmidt, 1957: pl. 8)

Fig. 4.20 Treasury Seal #4 (PT4332) (after Schmidt, 1957: pl. 4)

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Fig. 4.21 Treasury Seal #8 (PT4471) of Xerxes Date (after Schmidt, 1957: pl. 5)
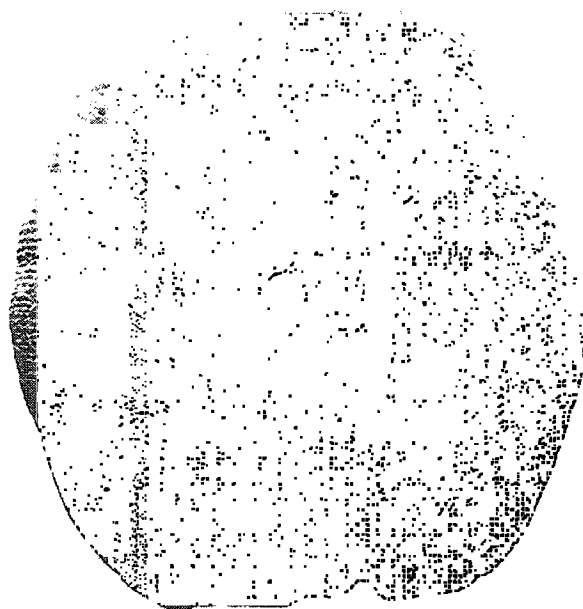
Fig. 4.22 Susa 2203/Sb1971 (after Amiet, 1972: pl. 189)

229
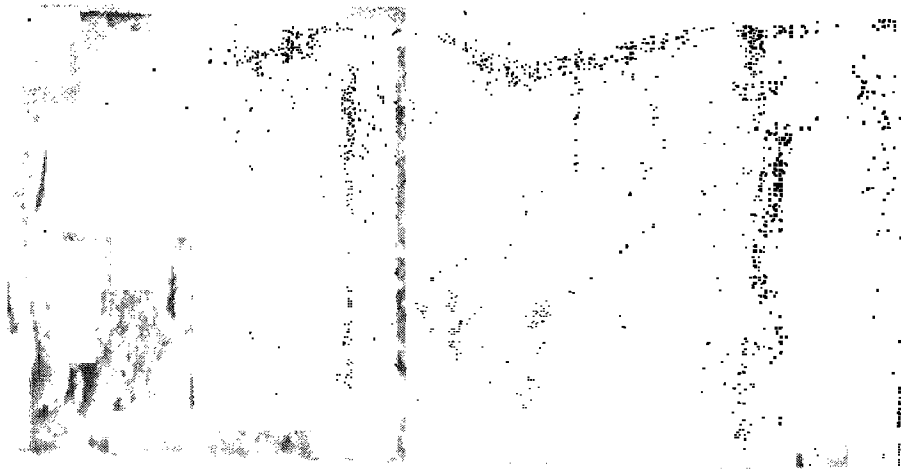
Fig. 4.23 Susa 2205/Sb1486 (after Amiet, 1972: pl. 189)
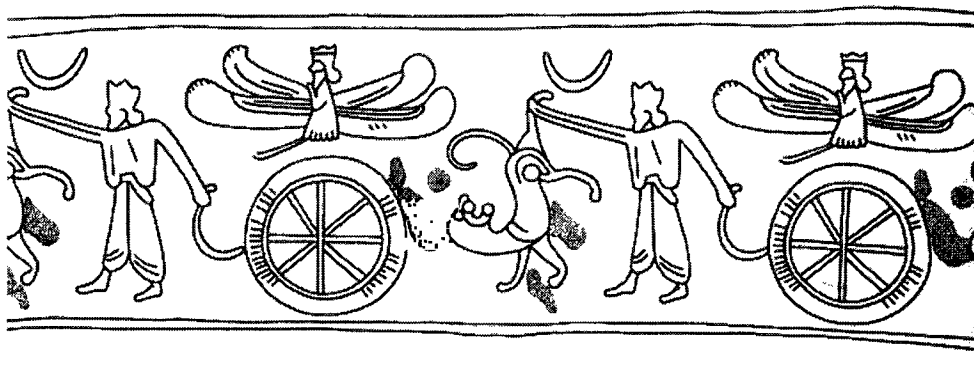
Fig. 4.24. Drawing of Seal from Pasargadae (after Root, 1999: 160, fig. 1)

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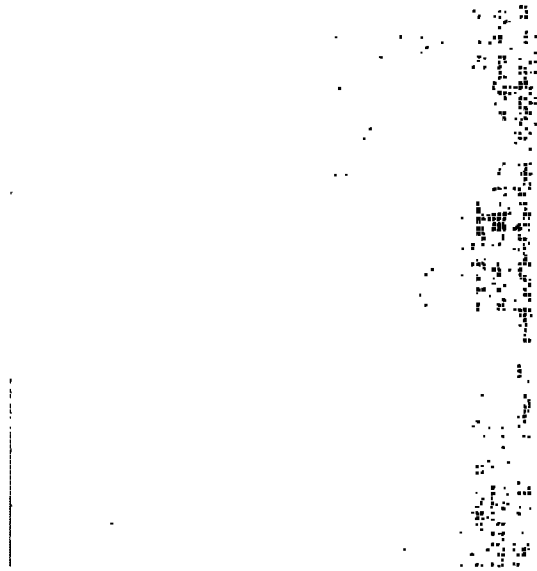
5.1(a) (after Ghirshman, 1963: fig. 558)
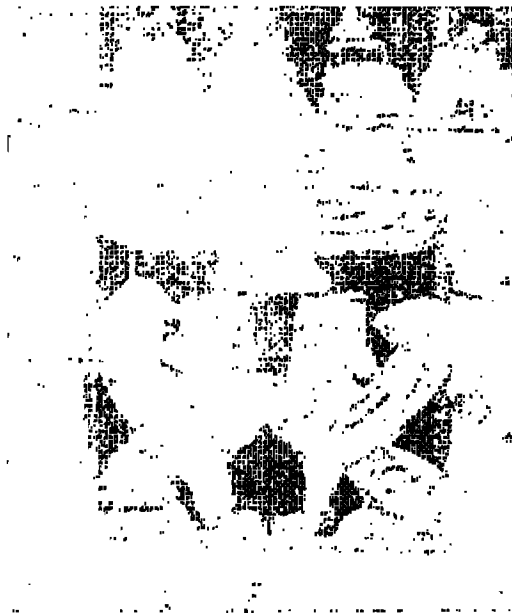
5.1(b) (after Dusinberre, 2003: 149, fig. 55)

Fig. 5.1a & b Gold Brachteates, Sardis

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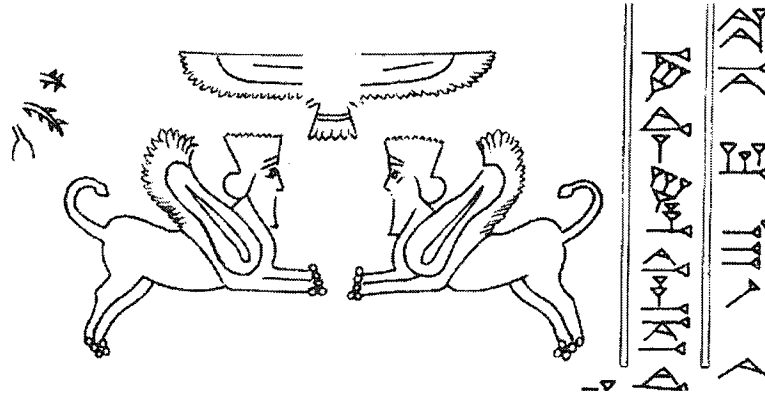
Fig. 5.2. Drawing of Daskyleion seal DS2 (after Kaptan, 2002: 154; fig. 5)
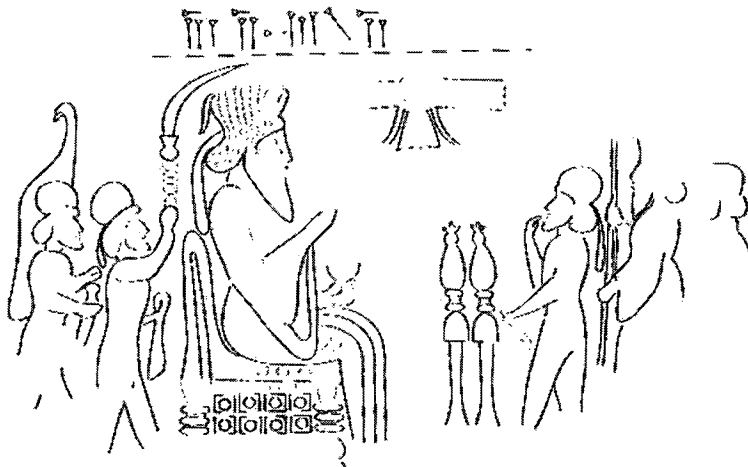
Fig. 5.3. Drawing of Daskyleion Seal DS4 (after Kaptan, 2002: 165; fig. 47)

Fig. 5.4. Drawing of Daskyleion seal DS14 (after Kaptan, 2002:175; fig. 83)

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Fig. 5.5. Shechem Seal 3, Samaria
(after Stern, 19 82: 197, fig. 317)

Fig. 5.6. Philadelphia 910, Murashu Archive
Nippur (after Haerinck, 1997: 32, fig. 12)
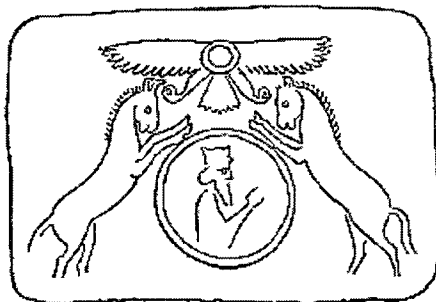
Fig. 5.7. Philadelphia 955, Murashu Archive
Nippur (after Haerinck, 1997: 32, fig. 12)
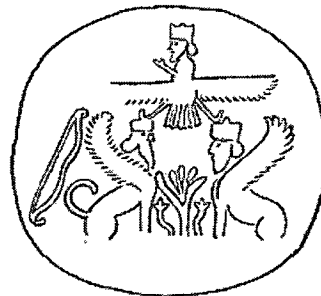
Fig. 5.8. Cultic scene from Murashu Achive
Nippur (after Haerinck, 1997: 32, fig. 12)

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Fig. 5.9. Impression of Gordion Seal 199 (Cat. No. 34) (after Dusinberre, 2005: 45, fig. 158)
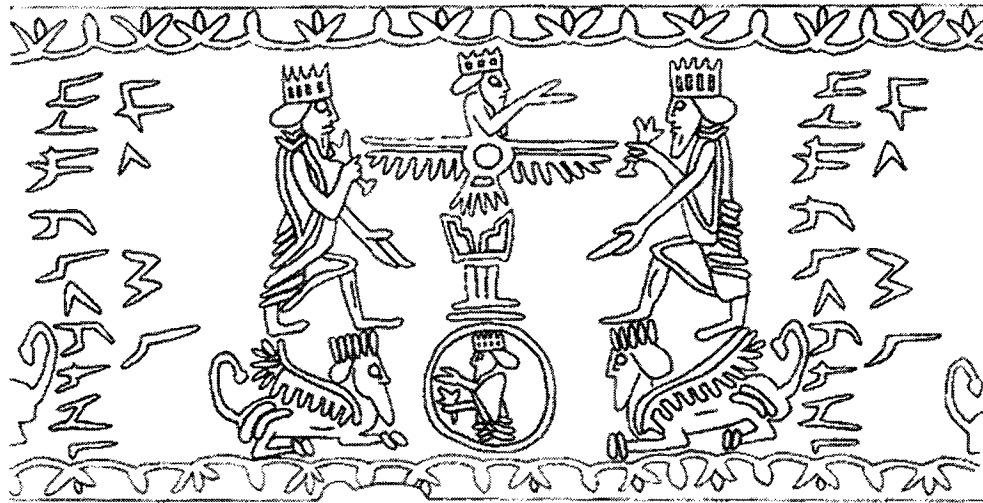
Fig. 5.10. Drawing of Gordion Seal 100 (Cat. No. 33) (after Dusinberre, 2009: 91, fig. 6)

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Fig. 5.11. Troy Seal (after Miller-Collett and Root, 1997: 356)
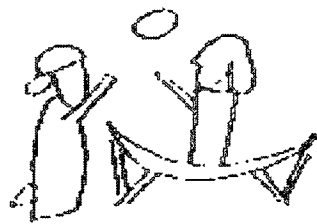
Fig.5.12. Sippar Seal B.12
(after MacGinnis, 1995: 165)
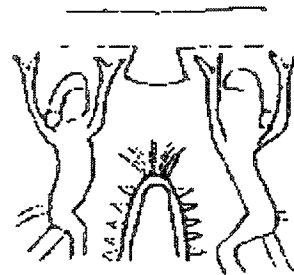
Fig. 5.13. Sippar Seal D.1
(after MacGinnis, 1995: 165)
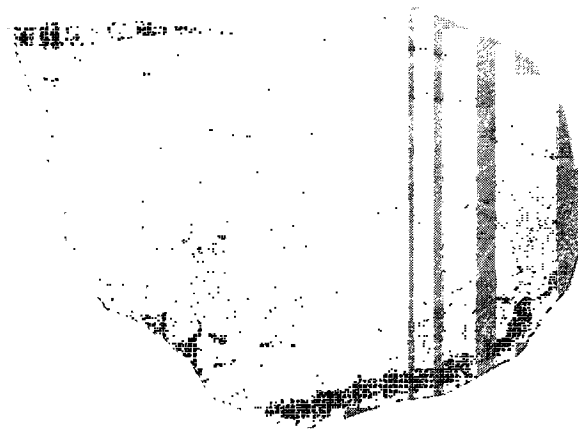
Fig. 5.14. UR seal 304 (after Legrain, 1951: pl. 40, fig. 759)

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